WHAT IF... ALEXANDER THE GREAT HAD KEPT CONQUERING?

COUNTDOWN TO VICTORY
The nine days that ended WWII in Europe

BBC HISTORY REVEALED

PLUS:
ALISON WEIR ON TUDOR QUEEN KATHERINE HOWARD

GOLD RUSH

The great global scramble to strike it rich

Cracking a medieval code
The race to decipher the Voynich Manuscript

Victorian super walkers

Bugs, butterflies and beauty
How Maria Sibylla Merian made art from science

PLUS Buildings that rose from the ashes From Notre-Dame to St Paul's

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GOLD DUST BOUGHT AND SOLD
GOLD DUST BOUGHT

Hundreds of thousands of people became caught up in 19th-century gold fever

The California Gold Rush of the mid-19th century transformed the west coast of America, as **hundreds of thousands of people flocked to that territory** hoping to strike it rich. And California wasn't alone. New Zealand, South Africa, Chile and Australia are just a handful of countries that also welcomed countless would-be prospectors during this period. In this month's cover feature, **we explore the experiences of the men and women who succumbed to gold fever** – from the often lonely and miserable experiences of life in a gold mining town, to the impact of the trade on indigenous communities. Find out more from page 26.

Elsewhere in the issue, as the 75th anniversary of VE Day approaches, we count down the **nine days that led to Allied victory in Europe in May 1945** (*p58*), discuss how the world might have looked had Alexander the Great continued conquering (*p74*), as well as **try to crack an intriguing medieval mystery** that has stumped even the most talented of codebreakers: the Voynich Manuscript (*p67*). **We'll also be looking at Victorian super walkers** – the men and women who made taking a stroll a competitive sport (*p37*), and the extraordinary life of Maria Sibylla Merian, a woman who defied convention to become one of the **greatest artist-naturalists of her time** (*p43*). And when you've finished reading all of that, we'd love to hear what you thought of it! Head over to *historyextra.com/revealedsurvey* to complete our reader survey and **tell us what you think of the magazine** – more details on page 50.

It's hard not to forget that, as I write these words, millions of people are facing substantial challenges posed by the current coronavirus crisis. I really hope this month's issue provides at least a temporary diversion from news updates and health worries, and would like to wish you all the very best over the coming months. Stay safe and take care of each other.

Charlotte Hodgman
Editor

Charlotte

THIS MONTH'S BIG NUMBERS

94,982
The amount – in kilograms – of gold extracted in Victoria, Australia, in 1856 alone.

52
The age at which naturalist Maria Sibylla Merian embarked on her 21-month expedition to Suriname.

20
The age at which Alexander the Great came to the throne, in 336 BC – he would die just 12 years later.

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ON THE COVER: ALAMY X2, GETTY IMAGES X1, SUE GENT X1, ON THIS PAGE: GETTY IMAGES

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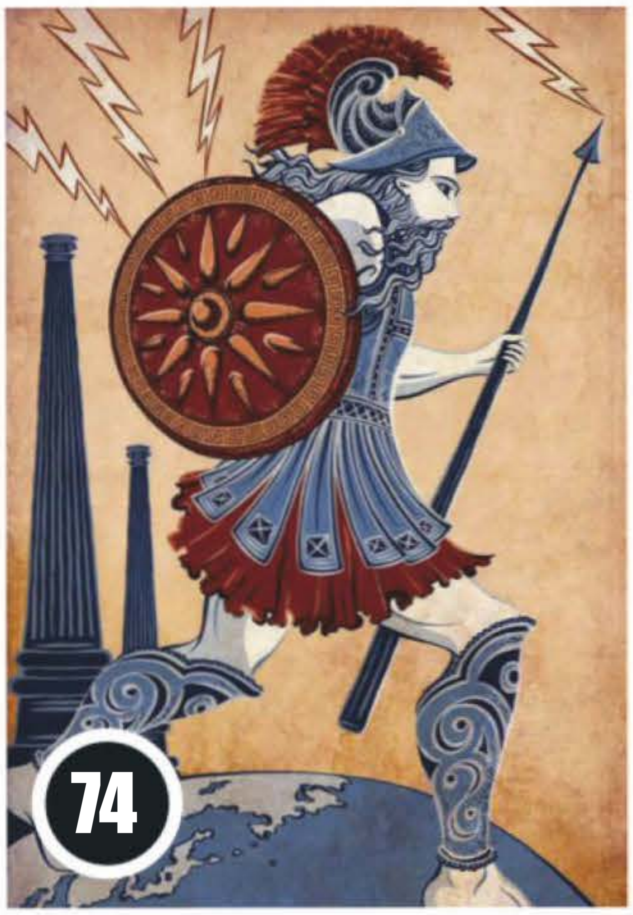
HISTORY REVEALED
SECRETS OF THE COLD WAR SPIES
HISTORY REVEALED

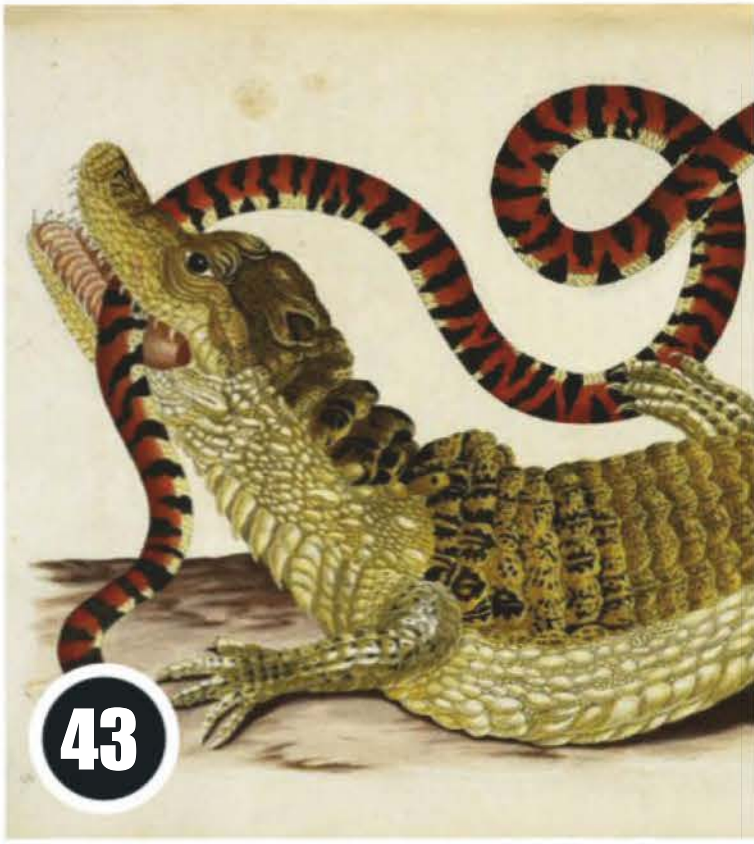
AKG-IMAGES X1, ALAMY X1, BRIDGEMAN IMAGES X1, GETTY IMAGES X4, SUE GENT X1

26
COVER FEATURE

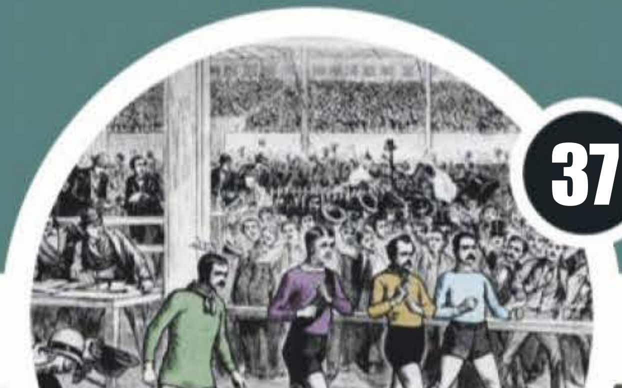
▲ Life as a prospector hunting for gold could be tough, fruitless and dangerous



▲ What else could Alexander the Great have achieved had he lived longer?



▲ Maria Sibylla Merian defied convention to become one of the greatest artist-naturalists of her time



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◀ The Victorians made walking a sport to be reckoned with

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▲ The Voynich Manuscript is packed with strange images and written in an unknown language – but what do they mean?

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▲ Seventy-five years ago, the Allies erupted in jubilation when victory in Europe was declared

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▲ The Cathedral of Notre-Dame and nine more historical sites that have risen, phoenix like, from the ashes

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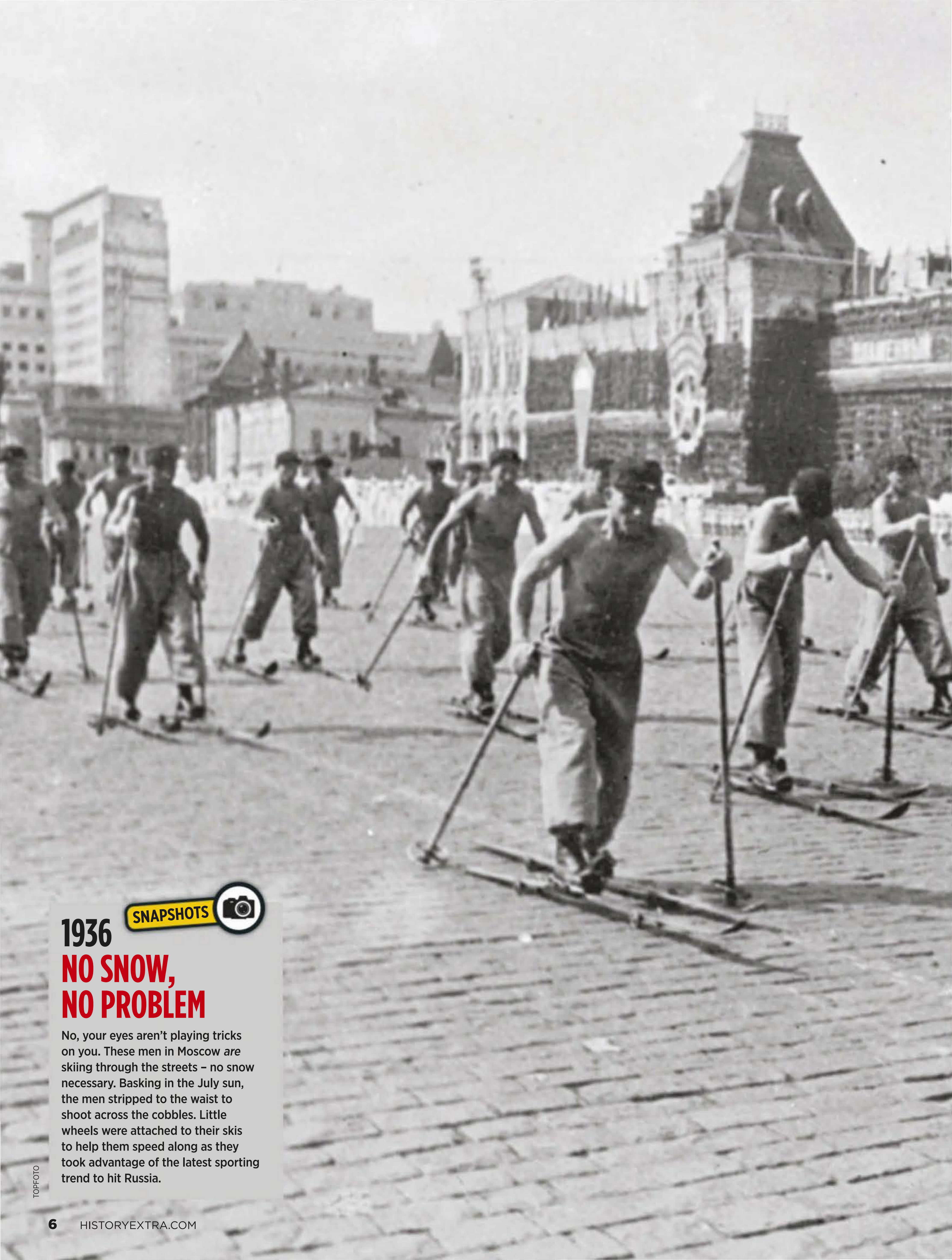


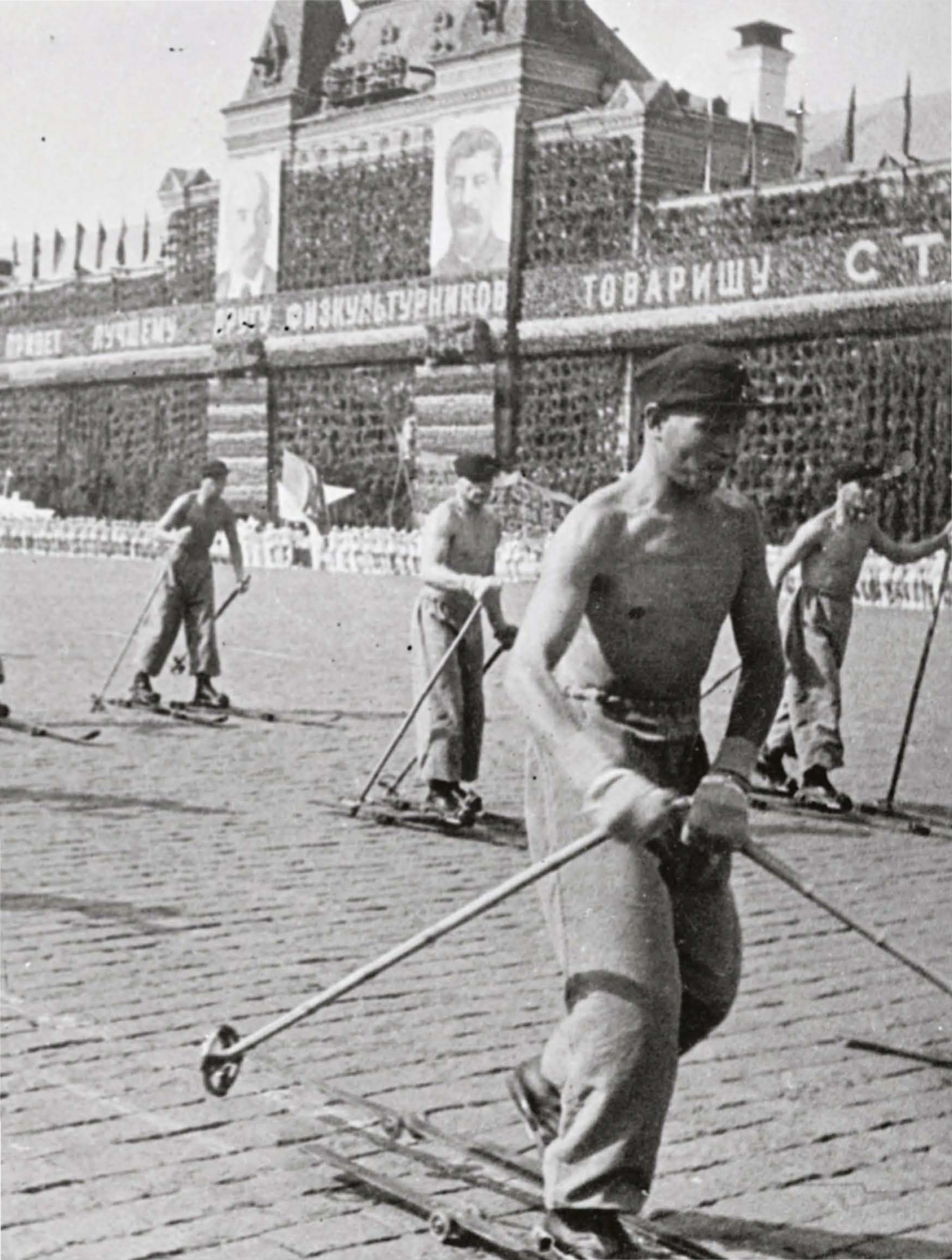
SNAPSHOTS

1936

NO SNOW, NO PROBLEM

No, your eyes aren't playing tricks on you. These men in Moscow *are* skiing through the streets – no snow necessary. Basking in the July sun, the men stripped to the waist to shoot across the cobbles. Little wheels were attached to their skis to help them speed along as they took advantage of the latest sporting trend to hit Russia.

TOPFOTO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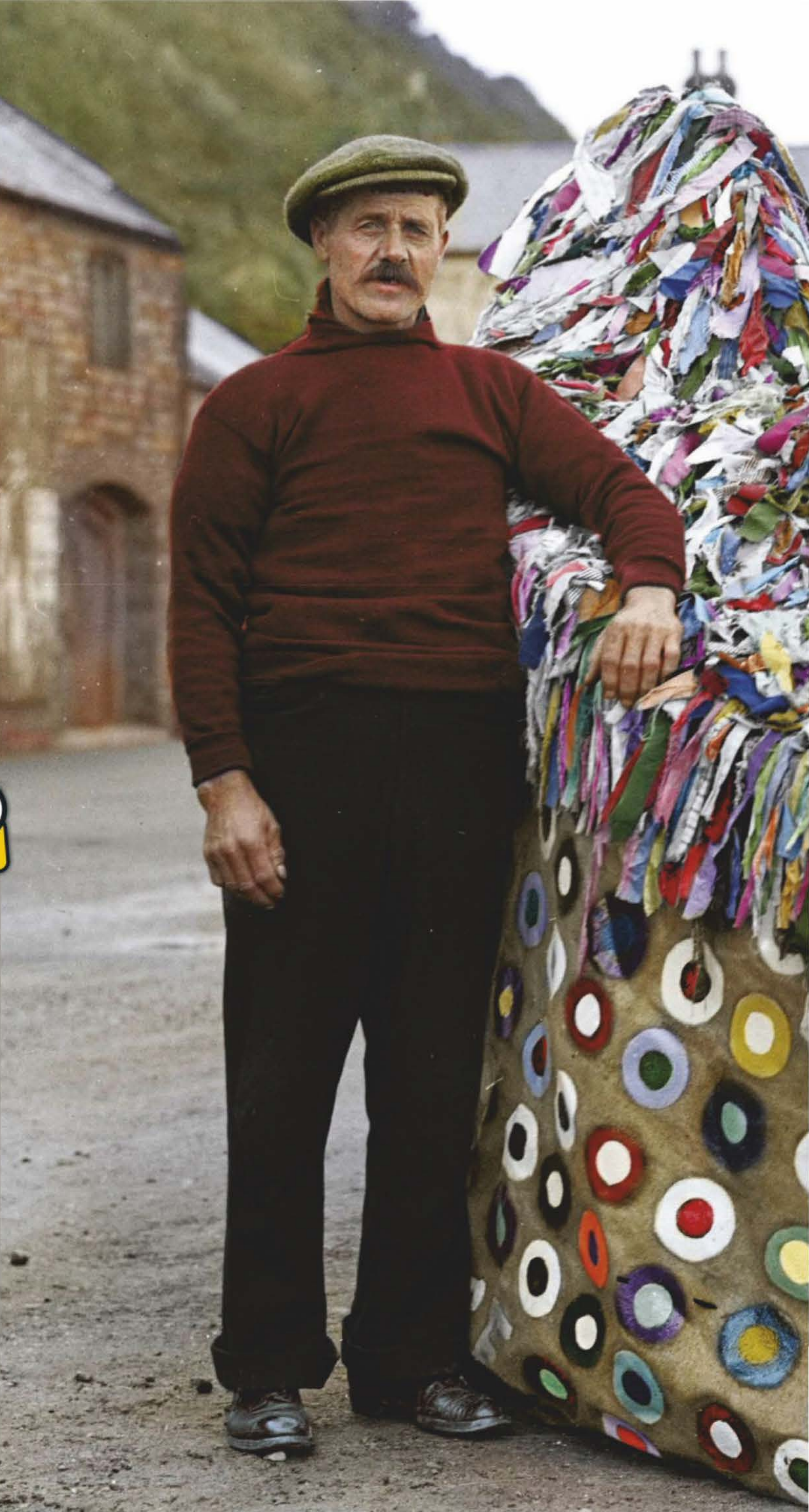
ТОВАРИЩУ СТ



SNAPSHOTS: HISTORY IN COLOUR

1926

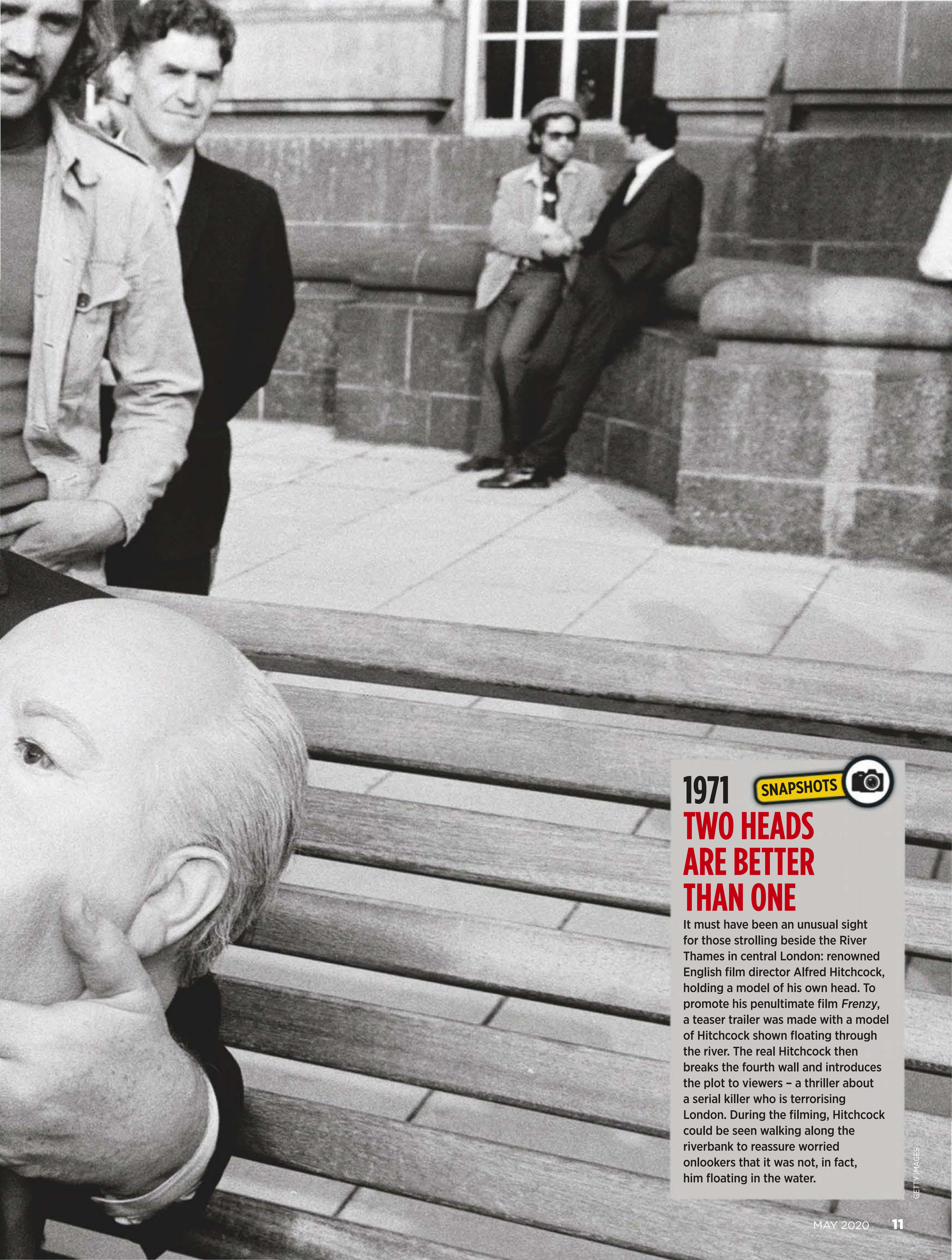
MAY NEIGH

As part of the traditional May Day celebrations in Dunster, Somerset, a local resident would dress up as a brightly-coloured hobby horse and be led through the town. The origins of this particular custom are unknown, though we know a bit more about May Day itself, which has been observed for centuries across Europe as a celebration of fertility, spring and the arrival of summer. May Day may even have its origins in the Celtic summer festival of Beltane.

See more colourised pictures by Marina Amaral @marinamaral2

TOPFOTO

PIER HOTEL
PIER HOTEL
FAMILY AND RESIDE



1971 **SNAPSHOTS**

TWO HEADS ARE BETTER THAN ONE

It must have been an unusual sight for those strolling beside the River Thames in central London: renowned English film director Alfred Hitchcock, holding a model of his own head. To promote his penultimate film *Frenzy*, a teaser trailer was made with a model of Hitchcock shown floating through the river. The real Hitchcock then breaks the fourth wall and introduces the plot to viewers – a thriller about a serial killer who is terrorising London. During the filming, Hitchcock could be seen walking along the riverbank to reassure worried onlookers that it was not, in fact, him floating in the water.

GETTY IMAGES

THINGS WE LEARNED THIS MONTH....

RECENT HISTORY HEADLINES THAT CAUGHT OUR EYE

5,000-YEAR-OLD SWORD FOUND IN VENETIAN MONASTERY

An archaeology student has identified one of the world's oldest swords, in a monastery on San Lazzaro delgi Armeni near Venice. Doctoral student Vittoria Dall'Armellina (*right*) wasn't even visiting the monastery for research purposes when she recognised that a sword on display, which had been grouped with medieval artefacts, was similar to those that date from 3000 BC Eastern Anatolia (modern day Turkey). Dall'Armellina, an expert in Bronze Age artefacts, spotted the sword in 2017; analysis has taken two years, but has now revealed that the sword is made of an arsenic and copper alloy and was actually forged around 5,000 years ago.

Tracer
CAUTION
X-AXIS

DEAD SEA SCROLL FRAGMENTS AT THE MUSEUM OF THE BIBLE ARE FAKES

After six months of testing, fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls held by the Museum of the Bible in Washington, DC, have been declared to be fake. The modern forgeries were previously thought to be from a cache of scrolls found in 1947 in the West Bank. The Dead Sea Scrolls are ancient Jewish manuscripts and include the oldest known surviving copy of the Hebrew Bible. The 16 fragments held by the Museum of the Bible its most prized artefacts appeared in the antiquities market in 2002 and are now thought to be made of shoe leather.

VATICAN UNSEALS ARCHIVES ON HOLOCAUST-ERA POPE

The Vatican has opened its archives on one of its most controversial popes, Pius XII (*right*). His reign as pope, from 1939 to 1958, was filled with controversy due to his perceived silence in the face of the atrocities committed by the Nazis, although The Vatican has always insisted that, behind the scenes, Pope Pius XII was working to save Jews and others facing persecution. Scholars have already booked out the space reserved for the consultation of these documents.

COURTESY OF ART FRAUD INSIGHTS X1, CA' FOSCARI UNIVERSITY OF VENICE/ANDREA AVEZZÙ X1, MARK HOURAHANE X1, GETTY IMAGES X2, CHRIST CHURCH PICTURE GALLERY X3

BONES IDENTIFIED AS ENGLISH SAINT AND EARLIEST RELATIVE OF BRITISH MONARCHY

Bones kept in a wall niche of a Kent church since the 19th century have been identified as most likely belonging to the Anglo Saxon princess and saint Eanswythe. A daughter of Eadbald, a 7th century king of Kent, Eanswythe is thought to have founded England's first nunnery. Long believed to be Eanswythe's, carbon dating has now proven that the bones belonged to a woman of that period who died aged 17 21. Some readings of her lineage suggest that Eanswythe may be the earliest relative of Queen Elizabeth II found to date.

SECRET WWII UNDERGROUND BUNKER FOUND IN SCOTTISH FOREST

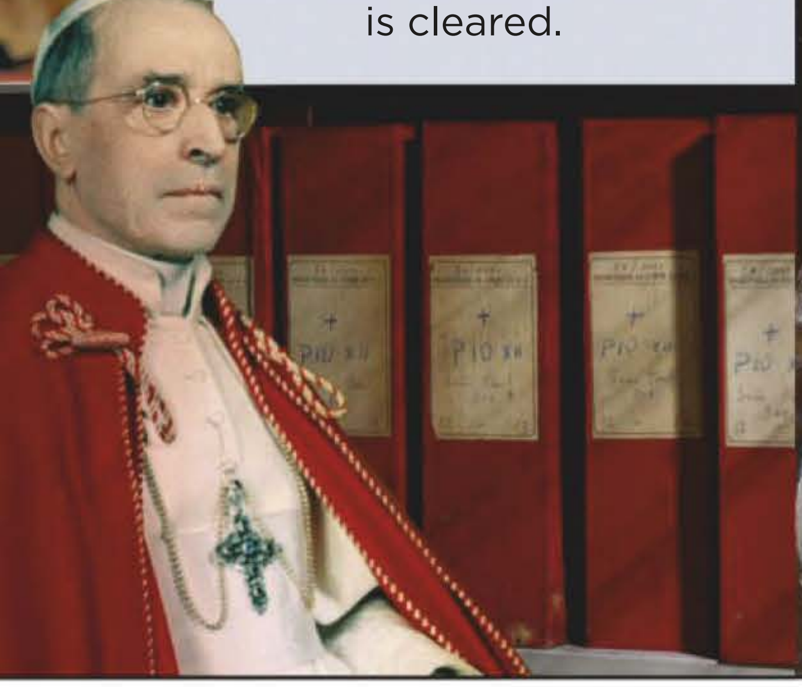
A secret World War II bunker has been uncovered during tree felling in Scotland. The underground bunker in Craigielands Forest, near Moffat, is believed to have been the base for an 'Auxiliary Unit'. These were specially trained and secret teams of local men who were prepared to cause mayhem in the event of a German invasion they were also known as Churchill's 'Secret Army'. Discovery of these bunkers is rare, as their location was kept a secret and many were buried.

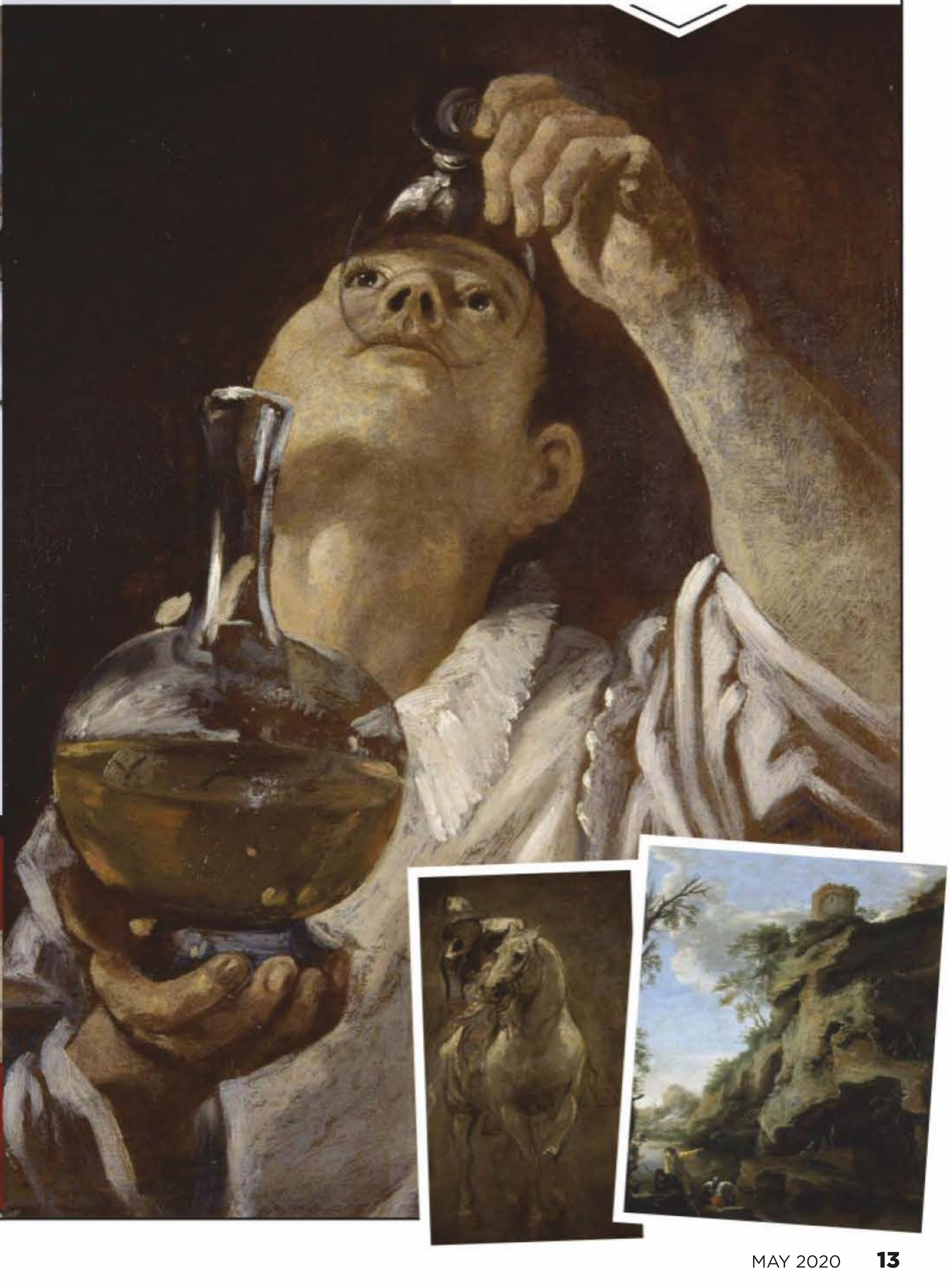
VALUABLE VAN DYCK AMONG STOLEN OXFORD PAINTINGS

Thieves have stolen three high value paintings from Christ Church Picture Gallery in Oxford. The gallery, which is part of the University of Oxford's Christ Church college, was broken into at 11pm on 14 March. The stolen 16th and 17th century paintings were Sal Salvator Rosa's 'A Rocky Coast, With Soldiers Studying a Plan', Anthony Van Dyck's 'A Soldier on Horseback', and Annibale Carracci's 'A Boy Drinking'. Police are undertaking a thorough investigation to return the paintings.

10 years

The length of time the Swiss town of Mitholz may need to be evacuated while a World War II munitions dump is cleared.





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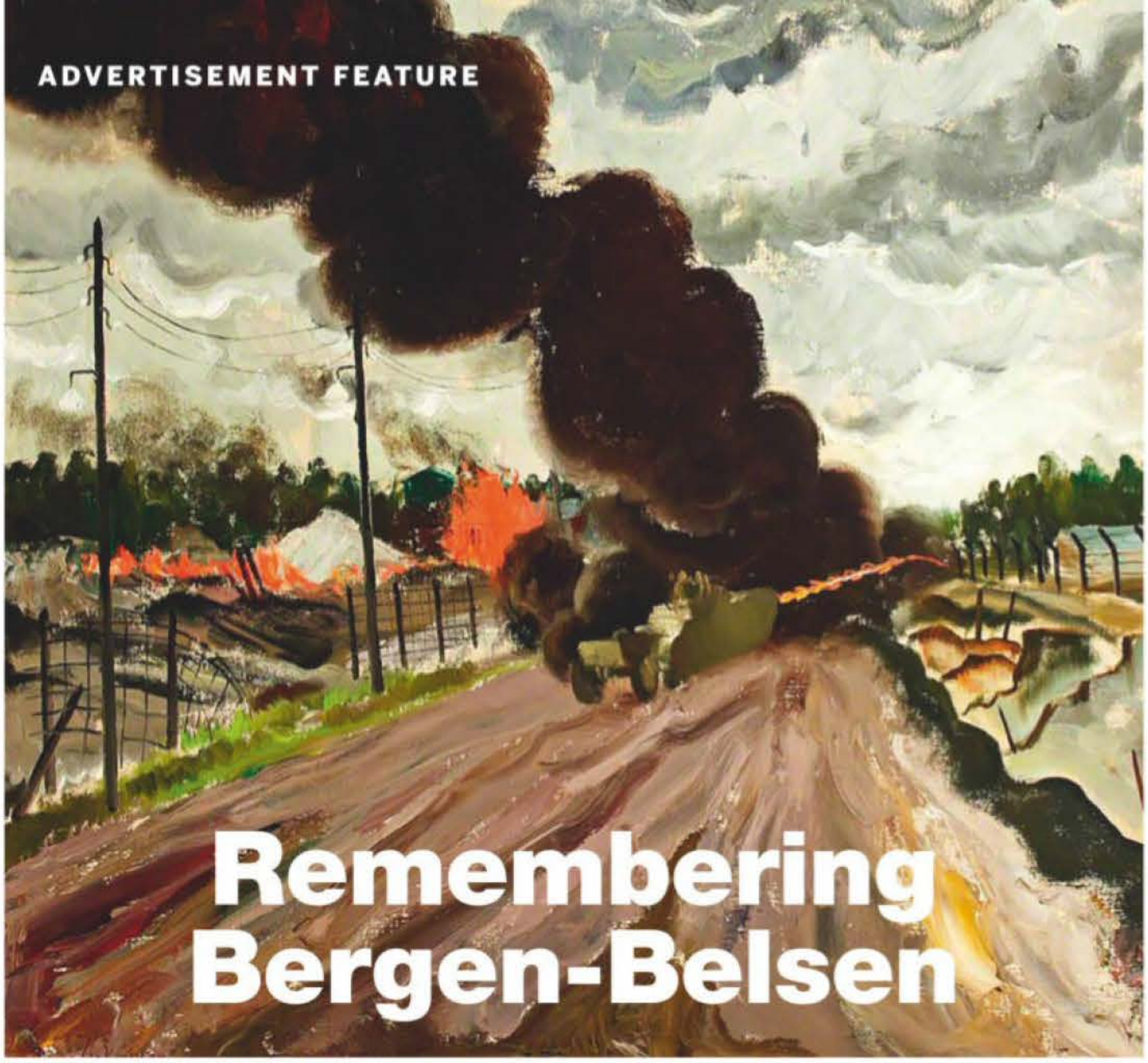
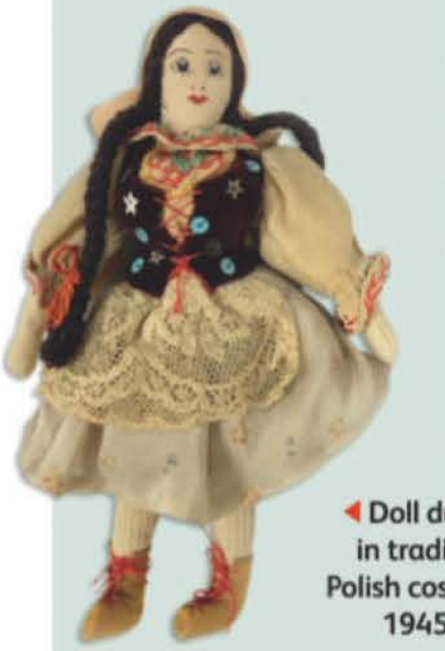
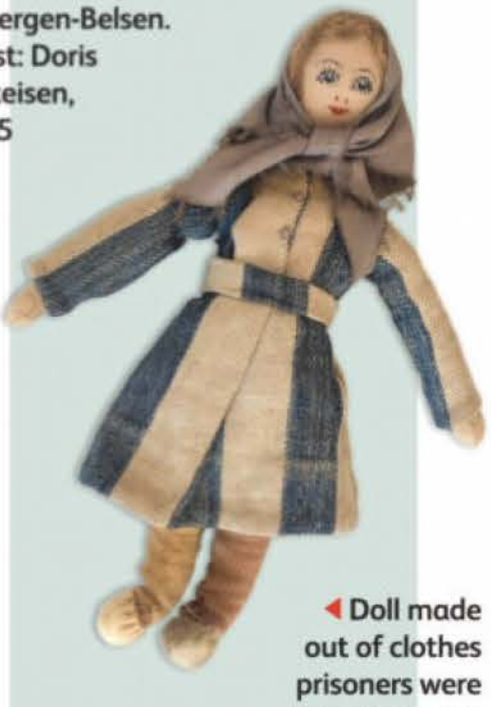


Remembering Bergen-Belsen

The Burning of Bergen-Belsen. Artist: Doris Zinkeisen, 1945



Doll dressed in traditional Polish costume, 1945-1946



Doll made out of clothes prisoners were forced to wear, 1945-1946

75 YEARS ON FROM THE LIBERATION OF THE BERGEN-BELSEN CONCENTRATION CAMP, MEHZEBIN ADAM, CURATOR OF BRITISH RED CROSS MUSEUM & ARCHIVES, EXPLAINS THE CHARITY'S ROLE

Situated in northern Germany, Bergen-Belsen was initially established as a prisoner of war camp. From 1943, a section of the camp became a concentration camp and was used to hold civilians, mainly Jewish people, including Anne Frank and her sister Margot.

Bergen-Belsen was liberated by British and Canadian troops on 15 April 1945. When the troops entered the camp, they found more than 13,000 unburied bodies and around 60,000 people, most of them sick and starving. The overcrowded and unsanitary conditions meant that diseases like typhus spread quickly and thousands were in extremely poor health. After the evacuation, the huts in the camp were burned to the ground to prevent further spread of diseases.

Just six days after the camp was liberated, five teams from the British Red Cross, together with a team from the Friends Relief Service, arrived to provide aid to civilians. Personnel included doctors and nurses, children's welfare officers, cooks and drivers to transport patients from the camps to the hospitals. As part of the relief effort, volunteer medical students were also sent to Bergen-Belsen under the direction of the British Red Cross.

One of the British Red Cross relief workers sent to Bergen-Belsen was Enid Fordham. She arrived in the camp immediately after joining the British Red Cross in April 1945 and remained there for 16 months. She later said that although she would never forget the horrors she saw, she would also never forget the courage of those who had been through so much suffering.

Dolls were made by survivors from Bergen-Belsen and given to Enid as a token of gratitude. The clothing worn by one of the dolls is made from the striped uniform, which the prisoners were forced to wear. It is believed that these dolls were made in occupational therapy classes organised for survivors after the liberation of the camp. One can only hope that the making of these dolls provided some emotional healing to their makers, having survived the horrors of the war.

BE A PART OF THE MOVEMENT

The work carried out by the British Red Cross is as essential today as it was during WWII. It's thanks to the generosity of the charity's supporters that it can always be ready to help those in a crisis, whether they're on the other side of the world or on your own street. By leaving a gift in your will, you can leave your own legacy and ensure the British Red Cross can continue to support vulnerable people – for the next 150 years and beyond.

BritishRedCross

For more information about supporting the British Red Cross with a gift in your will and the Free Will scheme, call 0300 500 0401 or visit redcross.org.uk/freewill

MY LIFE IN HISTORY

MEET THE PEOPLE BRINGING THE PAST TO LIFE

Textile Conservator at Historic Royal Palaces

Libby Thompson

HOW DID YOU GET INTO YOUR ROLE?

I've always had a fascination for history and as a child spent many family holidays visiting country houses and museums. After reading history at university, I stumbled upon the role of Textile Conservator while searching online during one of my temp jobs. I loved the fact that it would allow me to have direct contact with objects connected to historical figures or events, and that I could contribute to prolonging the life of these treasures. This discovery led to an MA in Textile Conservation, after which I secured an internship at Historic Royal Palaces (HRP); I'm still here, ten years later.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE PIECE OF CLOTHING HELD BY HRP?

This is a tricky question – it's like being asked to choose a favourite child! While our Royal Ceremonial Dress Collection holds many 'bling' objects, one of my favourite pieces is a rather plain, light teal silk waistcoat worn by George III, which is on show in our current exhibition at Kew Palace. It was worn towards the end of George's life, and this is reflected in the waistcoat itself. The shoulders have been adapted to allow him to be dressed more easily and there is staining on the front, thought to be spilled food.

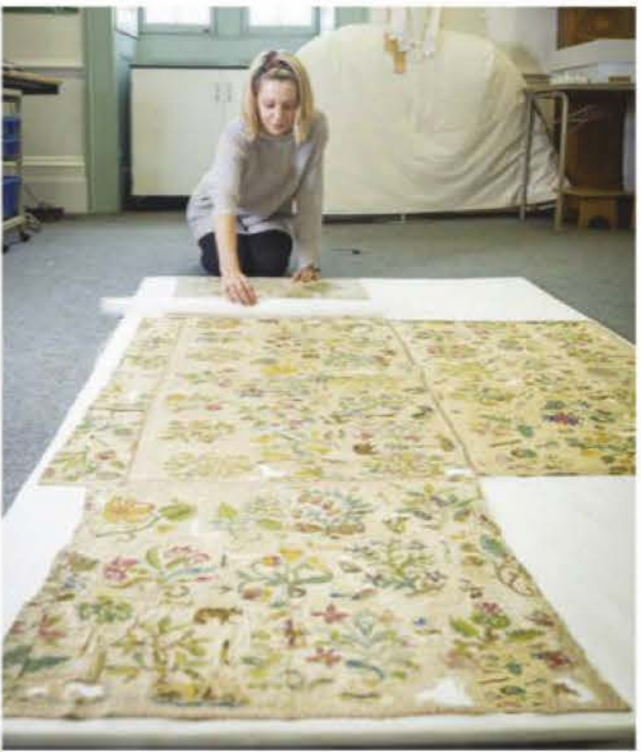
The waistcoat really offers a snapshot into the past, but as a conservator it also throws up some interesting ethical questions about the best treatment for it. Usually, we would try to remove staining, but as this is such an important part of the waistcoat's history, the contextual value it holds outweighs any long-term harm to the structure of the silk.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE MOST CHALLENGING PIECE TO WORK WITH?

The most challenging – but also most rewarding – object was the Bacton Altar Cloth, an embroidered cloth, which once formed part of a dress from the wardrobe of Elizabeth I. This was a real once in a lifetime project. Before it could go on show we spent more than 1,000 hours documenting, researching and conserving it, painstakingly removing previous restoration fabrics to reveal the back of the embroidery for the first time in at least 100 years. It was still almost as bright as the day it was done! Due to its fragility, the support treatment took a lot of patience and concentration, but when I saw it on display catching the light, it all felt worth it.

ARE THERE ANY ITEMS OF CLOTHING YOU WOULD LIKE TO WEAR YOURSELF?

Some of the objects I admire the most are our men's court suits from the 18th century. Court was *the* place to be seen, so these suits were often made from bright silks with embroidered flowers; some even have silver woven into the fabric. They create an iconic silhouette and would probably have been quite flattering to wear.



Libby Thompson hard at work on the Bacton Altar Cloth, the only surviving example of a dress worn by Elizabeth I

HAVE ANY SECRETS BEEN UNCOVERED THROUGH YOUR CONSERVATION WORK?

As a conservator you are in the unique position of being able to get up close to some really unique objects. You never really know what you might uncover – I always check the pockets in case there's some hidden secret in there. During the analysis of dye stuffs used on the Bacton Altar Cloth, we found that the red threads were dyed with Mexican cochineal, which was newly used after the voyages to the New World. Now this would have been a dye fit for a Queen! ⊙

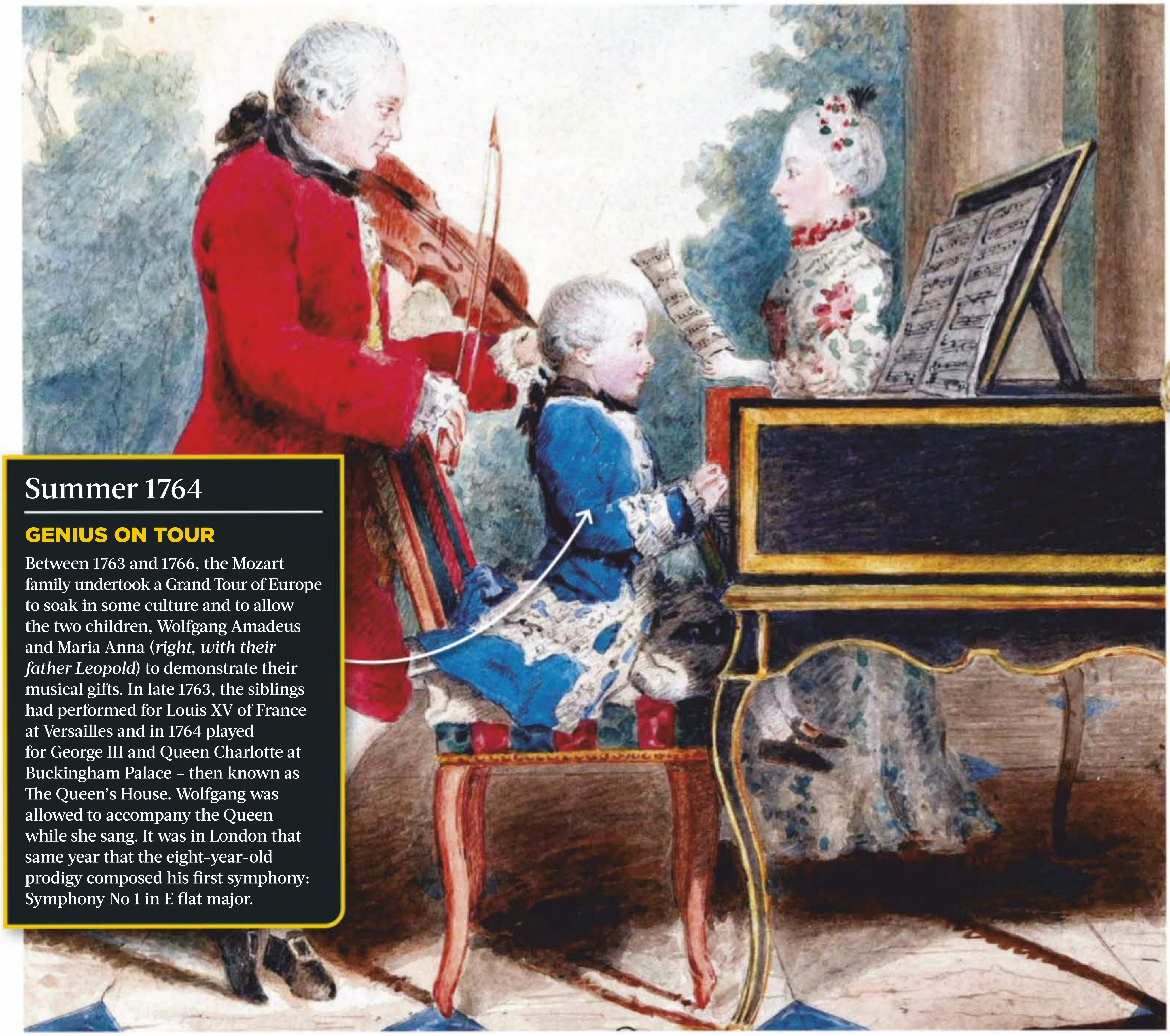
Libby is Senior Textile Conservator at Historic Royal Palaces: *hrp.org.uk*

HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES X2/BACTON ALTAR CLOTH COURTESY OF ST FAITH'S CHURCH, BACTON

YEAR IN FOCUS....

SNAPSHOTS OF THE WORLD FROM ONE YEAR IN THE PAST

1764



Summer 1764

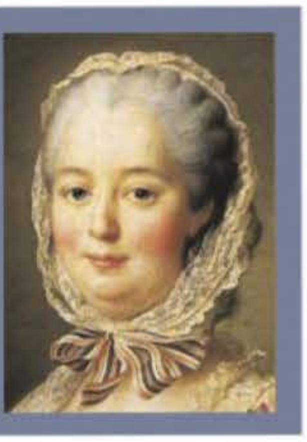
GENIUS ON TOUR

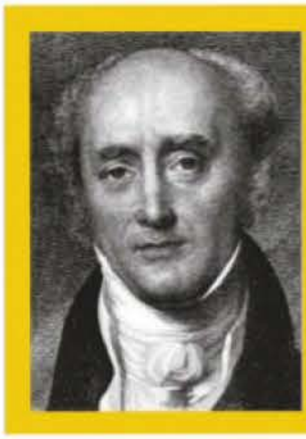
Between 1763 and 1766, the Mozart family undertook a Grand Tour of Europe to soak in some culture and to allow the two children, Wolfgang Amadeus and Maria Anna (*right, with their father Leopold*) to demonstrate their musical gifts. In late 1763, the siblings had performed for Louis XV of France at Versailles and in 1764 played for George III and Queen Charlotte at Buckingham Palace – then known as The Queen's House. Wolfgang was allowed to accompany the Queen while she sang. It was in London that same year that the eight-year-old prodigy composed his first symphony: Symphony No 1 in E flat major.

DIED: 15 APRIL

Madame de Pompadour

Dying at 42, Jeanne Antoinette Poisson had been Louis XV of France's chief mistress for two decades. Given the title of Marquise de Pompadour, she held so much sway that she brought down king's ministers and was a patron of Enlightenment philosophers.





BORN: 13 MARCH

Charles Grey

British Prime Minister in the 1830s, Grey led the country through the 1833 abolition of slavery and the Reform Act 1832, which paved the way for parliamentary change. He is popularly remembered for the tea blend thought to be named after him: Earl Grey.

GETTY IMAGES X7

5 April 1764

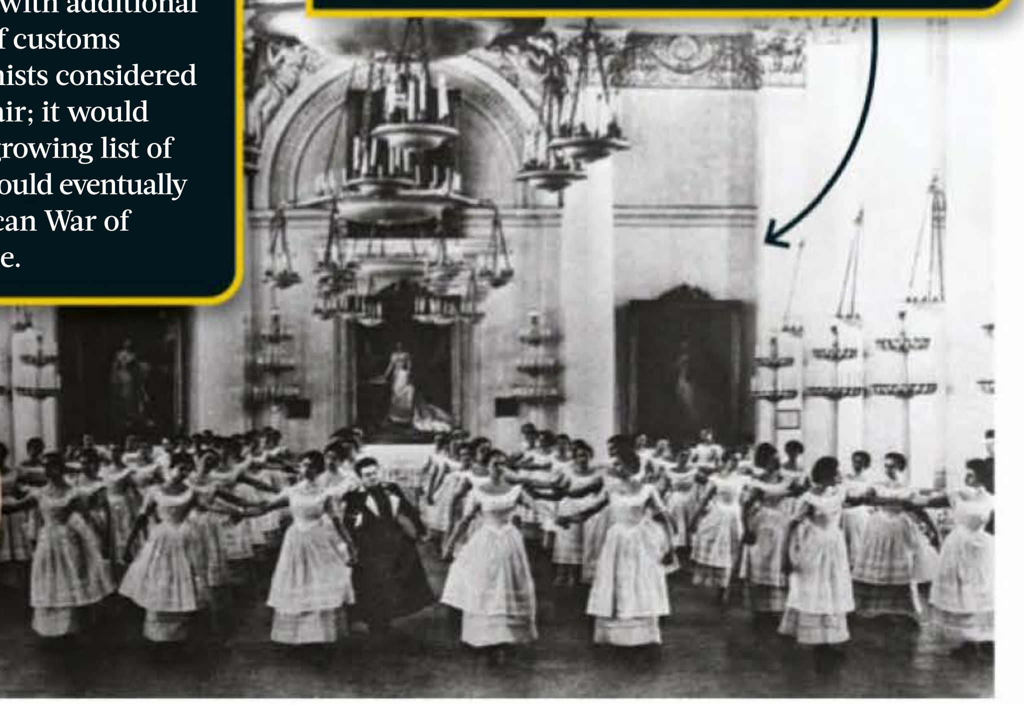
NOT SUCH A SWEET DEAL

The British government passes the Sugar Act in an attempt to end sugar smuggling in its American colonies and protect its own trade interests. The law was vigorously enforced by judges (who received a cut of any confiscated cargo) and saddled businesses with additional taxes in the form of customs duties. Many colonists considered the Sugar Act unfair; it would become one of a growing list of complaints that would eventually ignite the American War of Independence.

Exact date unknown

KNOWLEDGABLE NOBLES

To improve the education of the Russian nobility, Empress Catherine the Great founds the Smolny Institute for Girls in St Petersburg in 1764 (*pictured below in the 19th century*). From the age of five until 18, girls would live at the school with limited visits home. The school was one of the most elite educational institutions in Europe and considered an ideal place for gentlemen to find their future wives.



21 June 1764

NORTH AMERICA STARTS TO READ ALL ABOUT IT

The oldest-surviving newspaper in North America, *The Quebec Gazette*, is published for the first time. Still running as the *Quebec Chronicle-Telegraph*, the paper was originally weekly, in both French and English.

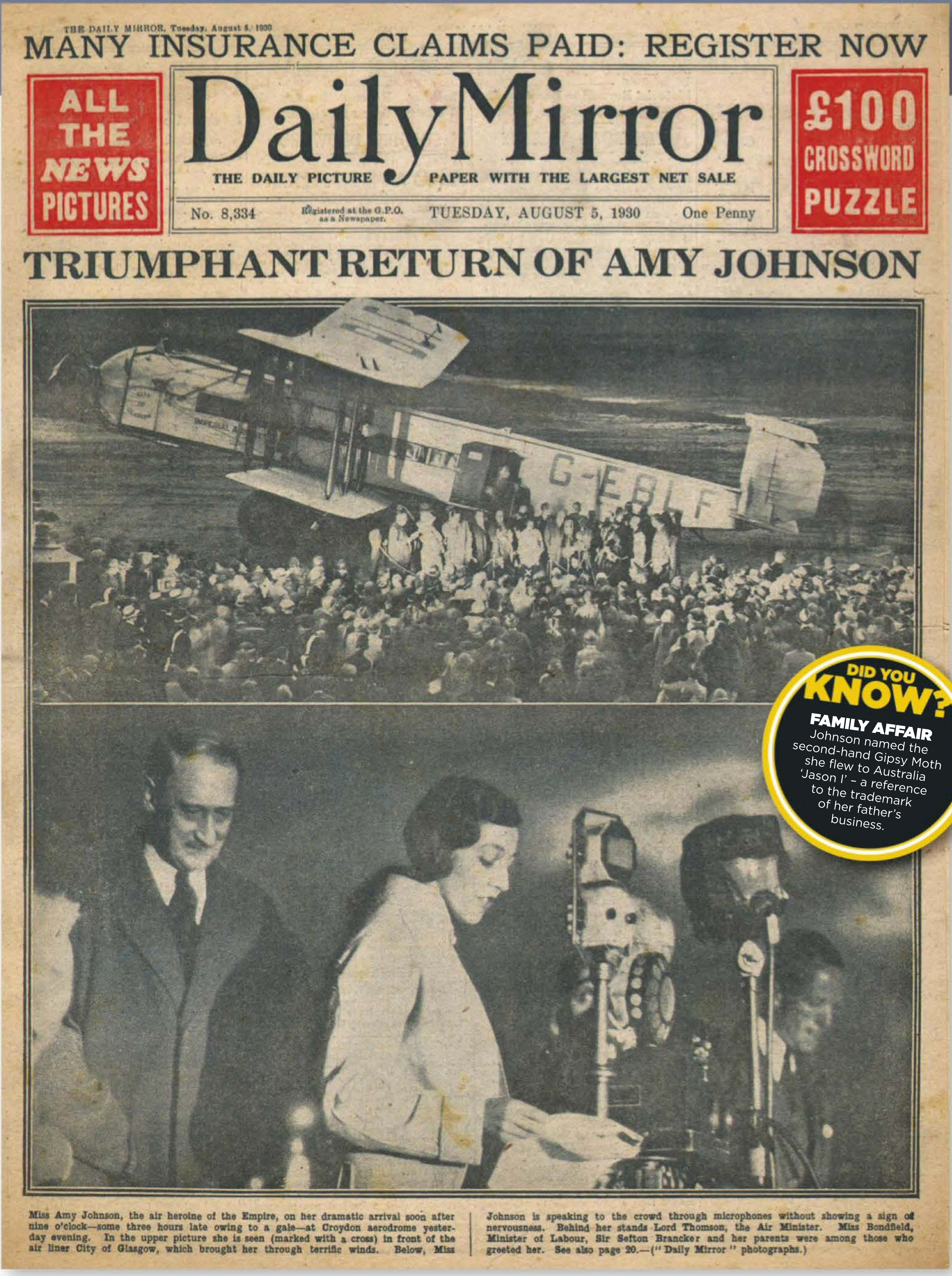
200

The estimated number of Székelys (a Hungarian people living in Transylvania) who were killed in Csík-Mádéfalva by Holy Roman Empire forces for refusing to serve in the army.

December 1764

THE GOTHIC NOVEL... IT'S ALIVE!

British MP Horace Walpole anonymously publishes *The Castle of Otranto* – the story of a prince who wants to break a curse placed on his castle and family. In the second edition, Walpole claimed authorship and gave the novel a new subtitle: *A Gothic Story*. Merging the supernatural and horror with a medieval setting, the novel's success spawned an enduring literary genre that has inspired writers such as Mary Shelley and Bram Stoker.



THE DAILY MIRROR, Tuesday, August 5, 1930

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£100 CROSSWORD PUZZLE

TRIUMPHANT RETURN OF AMY JOHNSON

Miss Amy Johnson, the air heroine of the Empire, on her dramatic arrival soon after nine o'clock—some three hours late owing to a gale—at Croydon aerodrome yesterday evening. In the upper picture she is seen (marked with a cross) in front of the air liner City of Glasgow, which brought her through terrific winds. Below, Miss Johnson is speaking to the crowd through microphones without showing a sign of nervousness. Behind her stands Lord Thomson, the Air Minister. Miss Bondfield, Minister of Labour, Sir Sefton Brancker and her parents were among those who greeted her. See also page 20.—("Daily Mirror" photographs.)

DID YOU KNOW?

FAMILY AFFAIR
Johnson named the second-hand Gipsy Moth she flew to Australia 'Jason I' – a reference to the trademark of her father's business.

GETTY IMAGES X2, MIRRORPIX X1

Aviator Amy Johnson returns a hero

Daily Mirror, 5 August 1930

On 4 August 1930, English aviator Amy Johnson made her triumphant return to the aerodrome in Croydon the starting point of her monumental journey across the world. She had just become the first woman to make a solo flight from England to Australia. The pioneer pilot had left England virtually unknown, with just a handful of well wishers to wave her off, but the scene upon her return was very different, as thousands gathered to share in Johnson's historic moment.

Born in 1903, Johnson later graduated from Sheffield University with a degree in economics, Latin and French, and had her first experience of flying during a joy ride at the Hull Fair. After moving to London and securing work as a secretary, Johnson indulged her love of flying and spent every spare moment at Stag Lane Aerodrome in north London; she was awarded her pilot's licence in 1929. Men may have dominated the skies in the early days of aviation, but Johnson was determined to prove that flying could be more than just a hobby and that women were as capable pilots as men. That same year, Johnson became one of the first women to earn a ground engineer's 'C' licence.

Little attention was given when Johnson declared her intention to beat the England to Australia record set by Bert Hinkler in 1928 at the time Johnson's longest solo flight was between London and Hedon, near her hometown of Hull. Hinkler had completed the mammoth flight in just under 16 days. Johnson's flight path which she chose simply by putting a ruler on a map and drawing a straight line took her across extremely dangerous terrain and required her to fly non stop for at least eight hours a time in an open top plane before stopping for fuel. But it was the fact that she was a woman that fascinated the media the most, with one newspaper erroneously reporting that she would be taking a cupboard full of dresses with her on the flight.

With limited weather information and no way to contact those on the ground, Johnson set off on 5 May 1930 in her de Havilland Gipsy Moth. While a monsoon in Burma (now Myanmar) destroyed her chances of beating Hinkler's record, she reached India in a record six days. On 24 May, Johnson landed in Darwin after an epic 11,000 mile journey, missing the record by just four days.

Fame awaited her. The British press dubbed her 'Queen of the Air'. In Australia, too, shortly before her 27th birthday, Johnson was a celebrity, with towns petitioning for her to visit and women asking their hairdressers for the 'Amy Johnson wave'. Songs were even written about her, including *Amy, Wonderful Amy.*

LEFT: **A 26-year-old Johnson stands in front of her Gipsy Moth just before her 19-day solo flight**

BELOW: **Her record flight completed, Johnson was greeted by cheering crowds on her arrival in Australia**

THE HIGH LIFE

Johnson would spent a lot more time in the skies on long distance flights. In 1931, she set a record with co pilot Jack Humphreys for a flight from England to Moscow and then across Siberia to Tokyo. In 1932, Johnson married Scottish pilot Jim Mollison, and together they continued beating records until their divorce in 1938.

During World War II, Johnson joined the Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA), which moved planes from factories or between air bases for the Royal Air Force, and she rose through the ranks to First Officer. Then, in 1941, she crashed her plane during a flight over the Thames estuary in Kent; her body was never recovered.

Due to Johnson being off course from her intended destination of Oxford at the time of the crash, conspiracy theories have since run rife. Some newspapers at the time proposed she had been on a secret war time mission, while others suspected that Johnson's death was covered up after she had been accidentally killed during a rescue attempt. The mystery remains. ⊙

Frost interviews ex-US President Nixon

More than 45 million Americans turned on their televisions with bated breath on the evening of 4 May 1977, waiting to see disgraced former US President Richard Nixon interviewed by English journalist David Frost. Across four 90-minute episodes broadcast that month, the titanic interview covered Nixon's five-year presidency, the Vietnam War and his personal life. But there was only one topic everyone was really watching for. They wanted to hear Nixon's thoughts on the political scandal that had caused his fall from power almost three years earlier: Watergate.

On 9 August 1974, Nixon became the first, and to date only, US President to resign from office. The unprecedented move was the result of events two years' before, when five men had been arrested for breaking into the Democratic National Committee (DNC) headquarters in the Watergate complex in Washington, DC.

Nixon, a Republican, was seeking re-election in November 1972, for which his Committee to Re-elect the President (mockingly known as CREEP) stole top-secret documents from the DNC and bugged their phones. When the wiretaps didn't work properly, the five burglars went back to finish the job.

That was in June 1972. In August of that year, Nixon gave a speech denying all knowledge of the break-in and declared that no one in the White House was involved. He won the election in a landslide. It later transpired that Nixon's office had paid the burglars hush money and instructed the CIA to interfere with the FBI investigation into the crime – clear obstruction of justice and abuse of presidential power. At the trial of seven indicted men, all but two pleaded guilty.

All the while, two journalists from *The Washington Post*, Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward, diligently investigated the case; they received vital information from an anonymous whistleblower, referred to as 'Deep Throat', who told them of tapes recorded in the Oval Office that would prove Nixon's complicity. Nixon eventually released the tapes and resigned before he could be impeached, but he escaped trial as his successor, Gerald Ford, issued him a pardon. Nor did Nixon apologise to the American people.

> "Nixon eventually released the tapes and resigned before he could be impeached, but he escaped trial"

RETURN TO THE SPOTLIGHT

Nixon withdrew from public life until he was advised that a television interview could ignite interest for his upcoming memoirs. Enter David Frost, whose talk show had recently been cancelled and who financed the interviews himself as no US networks would pay. Nixon himself received $600,000 for appearing (over $3 million today). Little was expected from the talk-show host, but Frost's expert and bullish questioning managed to extract something from Nixon that no others had managed: an apology.

Almost 29 hours of footage from a dozen interview sessions had been filmed at a rented California seaside home, and as the interview progressed, Nixon grew more candid. He remained adamant that

BELOW: **Nixon announced his intention to resign on 8 August 1974, and did so the following day**

BELOW LEFT: **Newspaper headlines on 8 August tell of history in the making**

Washington Star-News
ON TV AT 9 TONIGHT
Nixon Resigning
Washington Star-News
ON TV AT 9 TONIGHT
Nixon Resign
e Introduces

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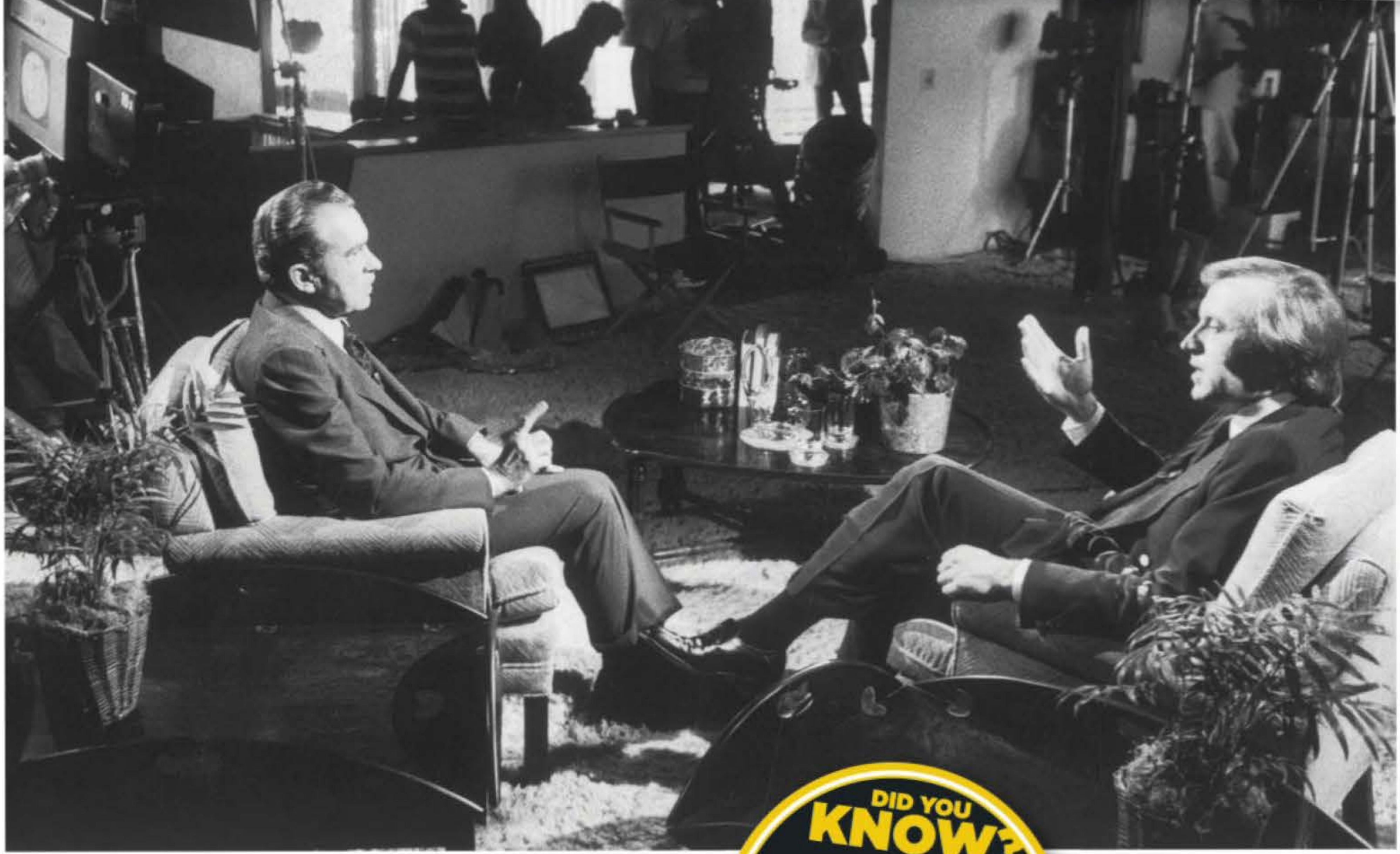


MAIN: **Nixon was paid $600,000 to speak to Frost in a series of wide-ranging interviews – recorded not on a professional set, but in a rented house**

RIGHT: ***Washington Post* journalists Bob Woodward (*left*) and Carl Bernstein exposed the cover up**

he had committed no crimes, insisting he was "not involved in the break in". He went on to say "I did not engage in and participate in, or approve, the payment of money or the authorisation of clemency, which of course were the essential elements of the cover up. That was true … I did not commit, in my view, an impeachable offence."

Yet, he admitted that his defence of his two advisors, John Ehrlichman and Harry Haldeman both convicted could have been seen as a cover up. Then came the most crucial part of Nixon's admission and regret: "I let down my friends. I let down the country. I let down our system of government and the dreams of all those young people that ought to get into government, but will think it's all too corrupt and the rest," he said. "Most of all, I let down an opportunity that I would have had for two and a half more years to proceed on great projects and programmes for building a lasting peace… which has been my dream."

FROSTY RECEPTION

In the wake of the broadcast, Frost's career went from strength to strength. He became the only person to interview all seven US presidents between 1969 and 2008, and all eight British Prime Minsters between 1964 and 2013.

As for Nixon, some viewers felt pity for him, though others maintained he was still covering things up and trying to gain sympathy. His reputation did revive slightly in the 1980s, when he took some overseas trips, including meeting Soviet premier Mikhail Gorbachev in Moscow but until his death in 1994 Nixon would never escape Watergate and his resignation. The interviews also live on thanks to a 2006 play by Peter Morgan, which was adapted in 2008 into the hit film drama *Frost/Nixon*.

DID YOU KNOW?

ABOVE THE LAW?

One of the most memorable quotes from the interviews came when Frost asked whether a president could do something illegal in the interest of the nation. Nixon replied: "When the president does it that means that it is not illegal."

LISTEN

BBC RADIO 4

Listen to Frost on Nixon on an episode of *Archive on 4*. bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01p9f64

IN A NUTSHELL

YOUR BRIEF EXPLAINER TO HISTORY'S HOT TOPICS

The Meiji Restoration

WHAT AND WHERE WAS THE MEIJI RESTORATION?

In 1868, the feudal military dictatorship that had been in power in Japan for nearly seven centuries, the shōgunate, came to an end in a swift political coup. The country returned to imperial rule, at least nominally. After the restoration came the Meiji period, which lasted until 1912 an era of sweeping social, economic and political changes that modernised the once isolated country and encouraged a fusion of traditional Japanese values with Western influences.

WHAT WAS JAPAN LIKE BEFORE THE RESTORATION?

Hereditary shōguns had ruled Japan since the late 12th century. There had still been an emperor, but they were more a symbol of authority. It was the shōgun who was the country's de facto ruler.

Since the mid 17th century, Japan had enforced a number of policies that kept foreigners out and Japanese in. This isolationism was to prevent foreign invasion and influence, notably the spread of Christianity, which was brutally repressed in Japan. Portugal, which had previously established trade with Japan, was ousted in a bid to reverse Western influence. Other nations tried to reopen trade channels but all were refused except the Dutch, who were allowed a trading post at Nagasaki.

In 1854, isolationism ended with the Treaty of Kanagawa, signed after US commodore Matthew Perry sailed into Edo Bay with warships and demanded Japan be opened for trade. It was the first treaty Japan ever signed with a Western nation.

WHAT LED TO THE COUP?

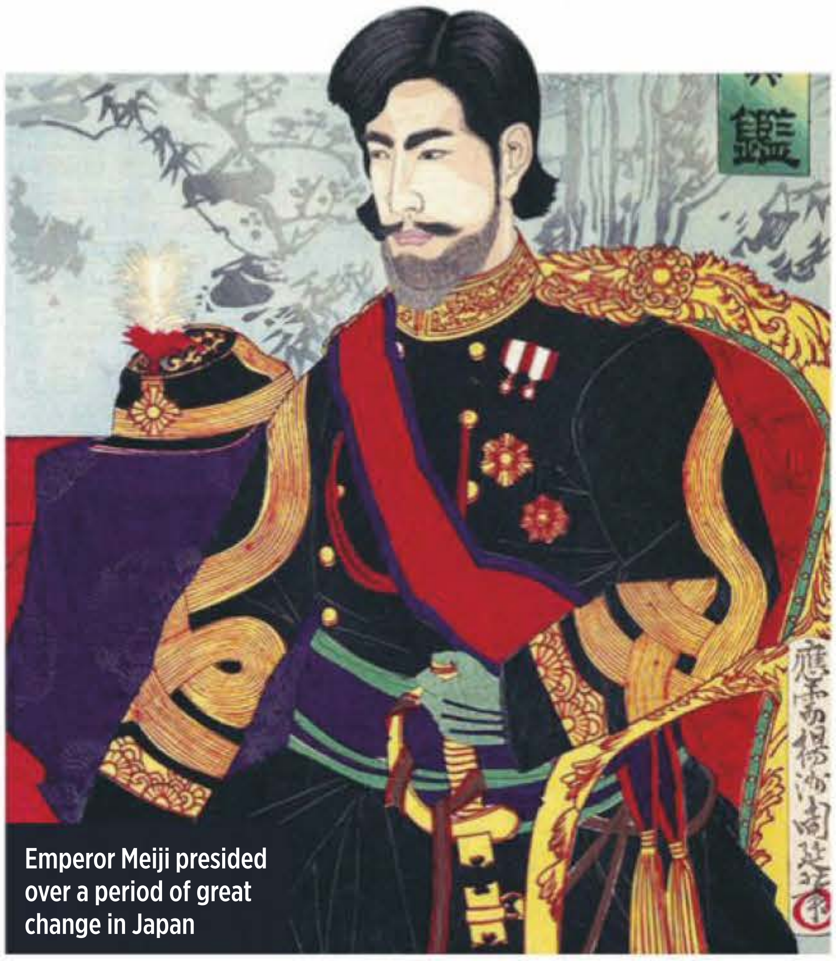
In 1863, Emperor Komei issued an edict ordering the expulsion of 'barbarians' (foreigners). While this led to some attacks on non Japanese people in the country, it also triggered retaliatory attacks. The move ultimately weakened the power of the shōgunate, which could not match the military might of Western powers. Japan's ruling classes wanted to create a centralised government under imperial rule, which would unite and prepare the country against foreign invasion.

ALAMY X2

WHAT HAPPENED IN 1868?

On 3 January 1868, a coup in the imperial capital of Kyoto launched with the aim of returning political power to the Emperor overthrew the shōgun Tokugawa Yoshinobu. The coup was largely led by samurai who had been brought together through an alliance between the *daimyo* (feudal lords) of the domains of Satsuma and Choshu. They declared the teenage emperor, Meiji, as overall ruler of Japan. The ousted shōgun Yoshinobu mounted a brief campaign to seize back power known as the Boshin War but he was defeated and surrendered in June 1869.

HOW DID JAPAN'S GOVERNMENT CHANGE?



Emperor Meiji presided over a period of great change in Japan

The feudal system and four tier class structure that had defined Japanese society, economy and government for centuries were removed. The regional domains, or hans, were abolished and replaced with the prefecture system (administrative jurisdiction) still in use today; the imperial capital moved from Kyoto to Edo (later Tokyo). To keep control and show strength, a national army was formed in 1871. The national slogan of the restoration became '*Fukoku kyōhei*', ('enrich the country, strengthen the army').

In 1889, the Meiji Constitution created a parliament, or diet, with an elected lower house and a prime minister and cabinet to be appointed by the emperor. The governments of the Meiji period introduced policies to unify monetary and tax systems and compulsory education was brought in based on Western models.

Yokohama, (*pictured here c1900*), is near the site where US Commodore Matthew Perry landed in March 1854

WHAT WAS THE LEGACY OF THE MEIJI RESTORATION?

The Meiji period ended with the death of the emperor in 1912. By then, modernisation had paved the way for Japan to become a global player. The Anglo Japanese Alliance of 1902 and Japanese victories against both China (1894 95) and Russia (1904 5) changed Western perceptions of Japan; the country was now respected as an emerging major power. Life changed for ordinary citizens, too: by 1925 all men over 25 could vote although Japanese women had to wait until 1945 before they were granted the same right.

Rajan Datar explores the making of modern Japan on an episode of *The Forum* on the BBC World Service. *bbc.co.uk/programmes/w3cswpsh*

VE DAY 75TH ANNIVERSARY ANNOUNCEMENT

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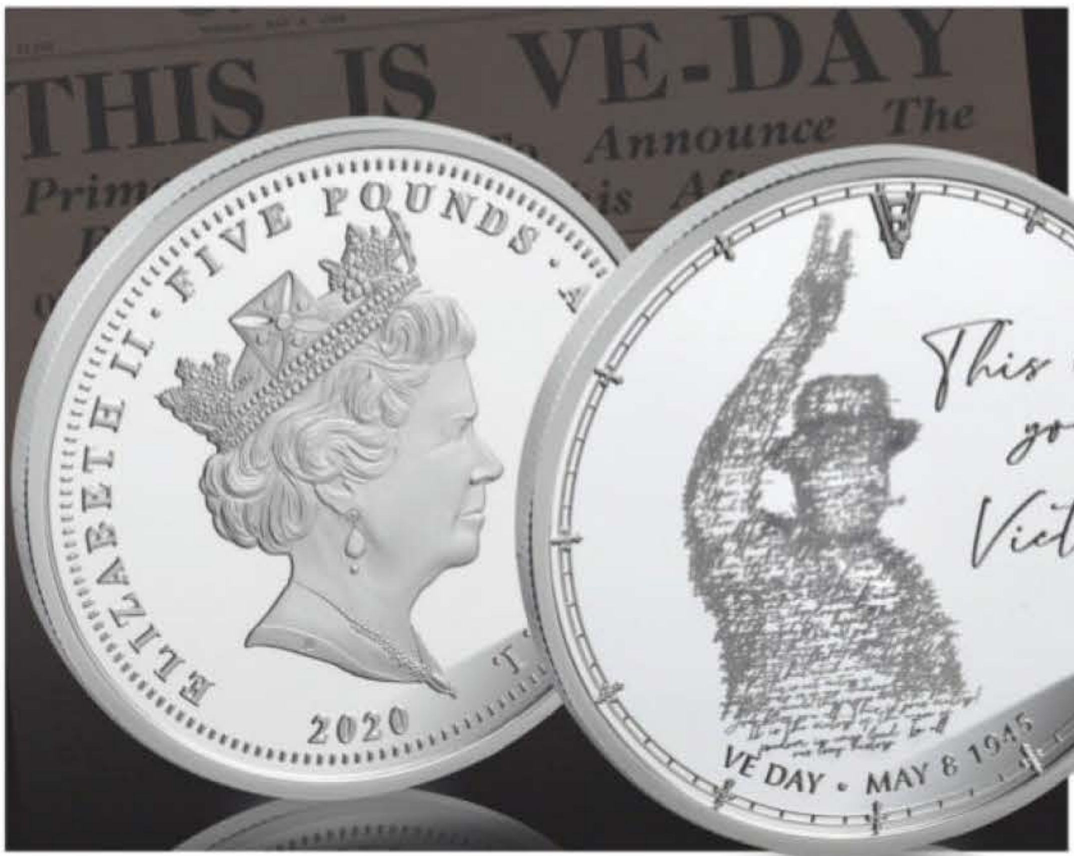
SOLDIER, WRITER,
HISTORIAN AND
JOURNALIST**

VE Day 75 years on

This year, on May 8, a special programme of events will take place across the United Kingdom to commemorate Allied Victory in Europe and pay tribute to the Second World War generation who served at home and overseas.

Over the bank holiday weekend, as we remember the heroes of the Second World War, Winston Churchill's victory speech will once again resound across the country just as it did 75 years ago. It is scheduled to be rebroadcast in public spaces as part of the VE Day 75th anniversary commemorations. The new £5 Coin issued to mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day fittingly depicts Churchill in his own words, taken from that victory speech.

However we choose to mark the occasion, this year's anniversary is a poignant and possibly final opportunity for the nation to give thanks to all those who contributed to a defining moment in history.



Churchill £5 Coin issued to mark 75 years since VE Day

JUST 49,999 COINS ARE BEING RELEASED WORLDWIDE

75 Years ago, on May 8, 1945, Churchill addressed the nation, *"God bless you all. This is your victory! It is the victory of the cause of freedom in every land. In all our long history we have never seen a greater day than this"*. The long-awaited day of peace had come, and the years of hostility in Europe ended.

To mark the 75th Anniversary of VE Day in 2020, a new £5 coin has been issued — the VE Day 75th Anniversary £5 coin.

The coin features a portrait of Churchill with his iconic V for Victory sign. Implementing an ingenious minting technique his portrait is made from the words of his speech as he addressed the nation on VE Day.

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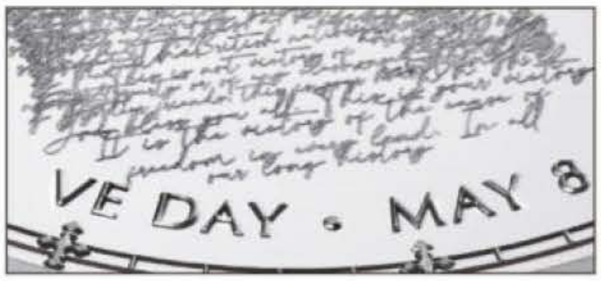
The coin is available from The Bradford Exchange for £5 (plus £2.99 p&p*). All orders will receive the Collectors' Pack and Certificate of Authenticity Completely FREE. Customers will also have the opportunity to collect the remaining five coins in the *Words that Won the War* Coin Set for just £39.95 (+£2.99 p&p) each; which will be sent on the Bradford Exchange 14-day home approval service, entirely without obligation.

© IWM (H 41849)

The inspiration behind the VE Day 75th Anniversary £5 Coin: May 8, 1945, Churchill waves to the crowds in Whitehall, on the day he broadcast to the nation that the war with Germany had been won "This is your Victory" he tells the nation.

Available now for just £5 plus p&p



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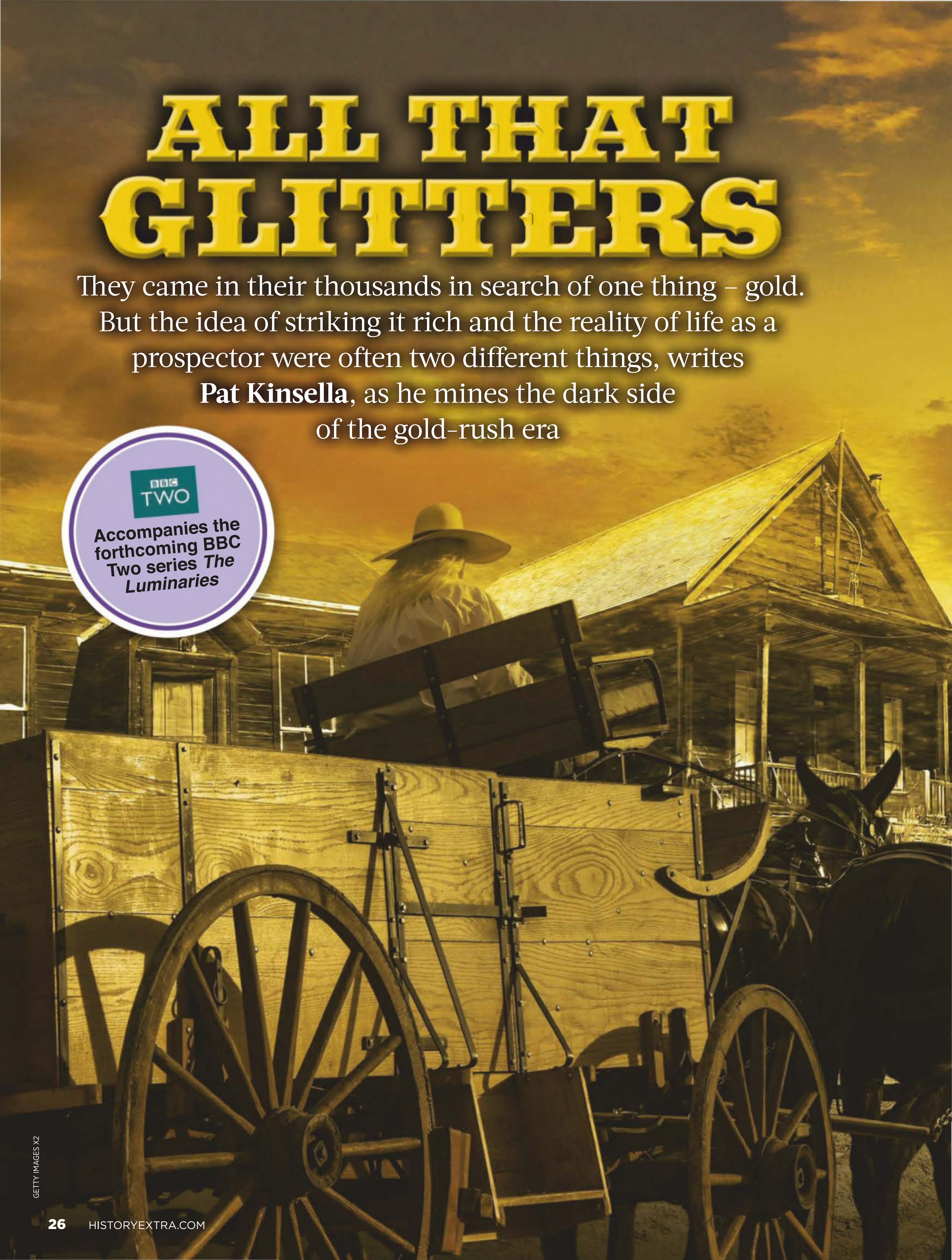
ALL THAT GLITTERS

They came in their thousands in search of one thing – gold. But the idea of striking it rich and the reality of life as a prospector were often two different things, writes **Pat Kinsella**, as he mines the dark side of the gold-rush era



BBC TWO

Accompanies the forthcoming BBC Two series *The Luminaries*

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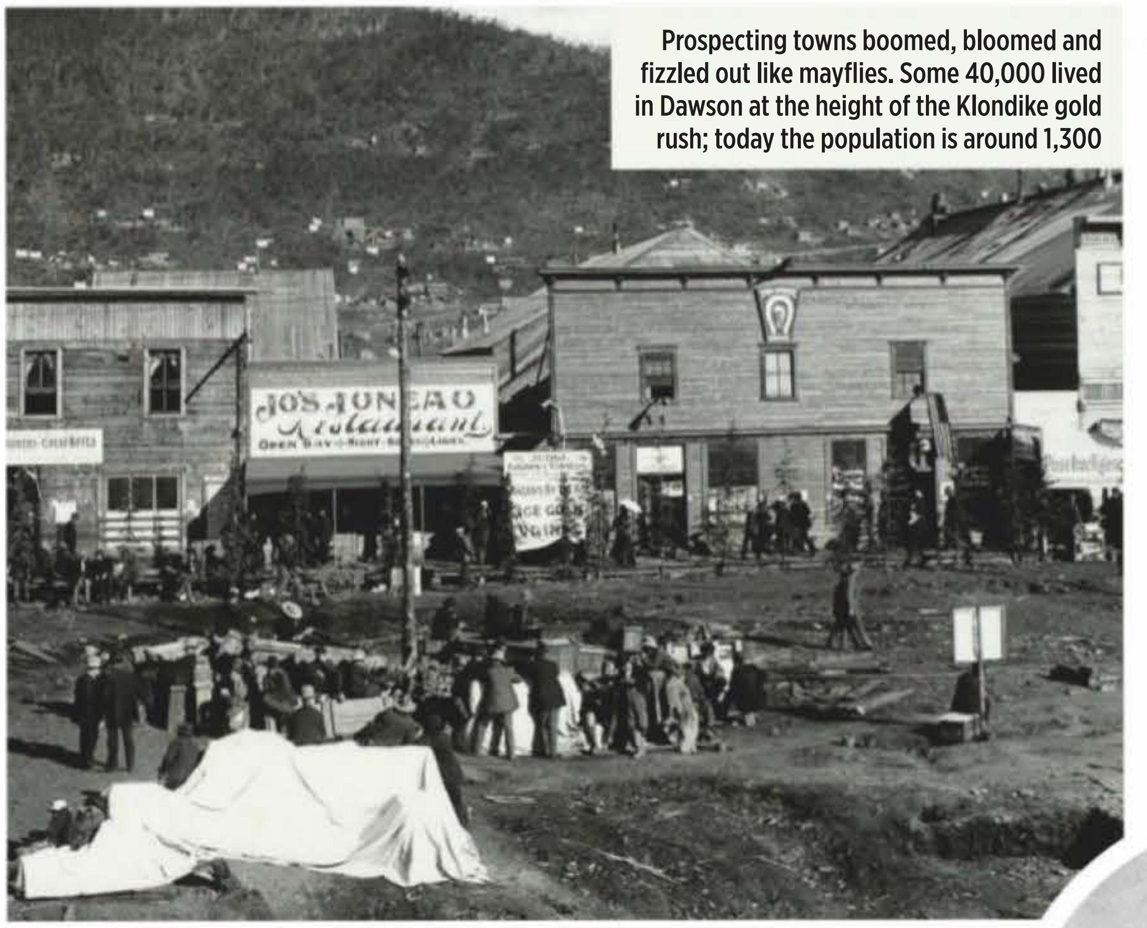
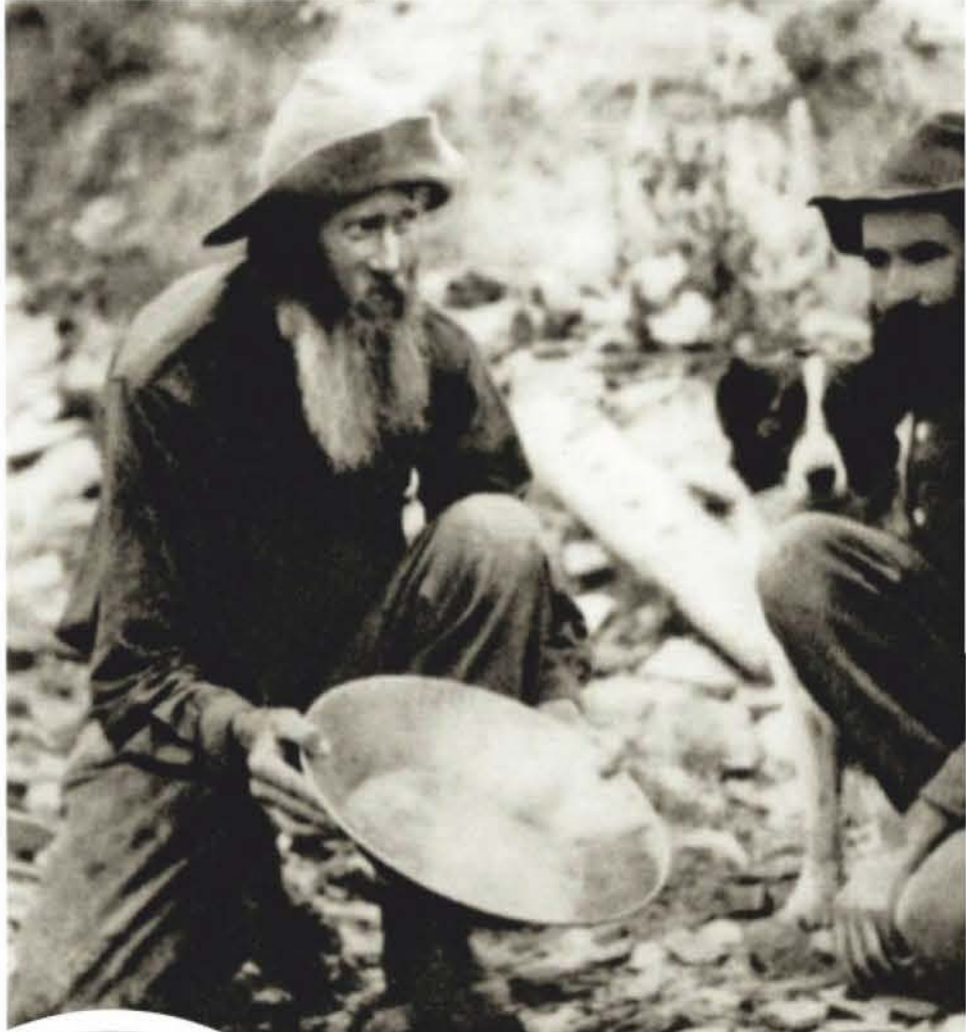
PROSPECT



Prospecting towns boomed, bloomed and fizzled out like mayflies. Some 40,000 lived in Dawson at the height of the Klondike gold rush; today the population is around 1,300



During the 19th century, the discovery of gold in far-flung corners of the world could literally put a place on the map. Overnight, anonymous stretches of America, Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand became powerful vortexes, sucking in thousands of fortune hunters from around the globe in a frenzy of fossicking.

This itinerant rabble of gold rushers were an excitable and eclectic bunch, encompassing Cornish tin miners, Scottish crofters, Irish labourers, Chinese fishermen, Chilean farmers, Australian clerks, emancipated African-heritage slaves, Mexican soldiers, German blacksmiths, Italian aristocrats and American authors. They spoke many languages in an even greater variety of accents, but almost exclusively they were male. And they all had one thing on their mind: gold. Such a kaleidoscopically colourful collection of humanity, suddenly converging on the very edge of nowhere, populating pop-up towns and cities with no infrastructure, accommodation or law enforcement, sounds like a recipe for disaster. And often it was.

No matter where in the world these stampeders rushed off to – California, Victoria, Otago, Witwatersrand, the Klondike – the story that unfolded once they arrived was always similar. Though a few got lucky and became rich, most saw their dreams die and their savings evaporate. Illness, destitution and death were common outcomes, and many of those who escaped such misfortunes never returned home, despite families and workplaces awaiting them, inflicting a hidden cost on communities worlds apart.

Reality very rarely met expectation, and the only distractions from digging dirt and sifting silt involved gambling, boozing, brawling and prostitution the latter sometimes involving indentured labour. As hastily thrown up towns rapidly boomed (and then often quickly went bust), crime and ethnic conflict erupted through the faultlines, accompanied by vigilantism and violence. Vulnerable indigenous communities were commonly displaced, and sometimes obliterated altogether.

This script played out multiple times across the globe throughout the 1800s, with a slightly different cast of very similar characters involved every time. But the biggest gold rush drama of all in terms of sheer numbers, and the weight of its cultural, physical and literary legacy happened on the west coast of America, right in the middle of the century.

CALIFORNIA, HERE THEY COME

On 24 January 1848, James Marshall, a carpenter working on a new sawmill in the small Californian settlement of Coloma, saw the morning sun glinting on something in the channel of water he was examining – part of the American River. He reached in and scooped up some of the shiny flecks of metal that had caught his eye. In his hands, Marshall was clutching a tiny amount of a substance that would transform the fortunes, and shape the future, of the American West. Gold.

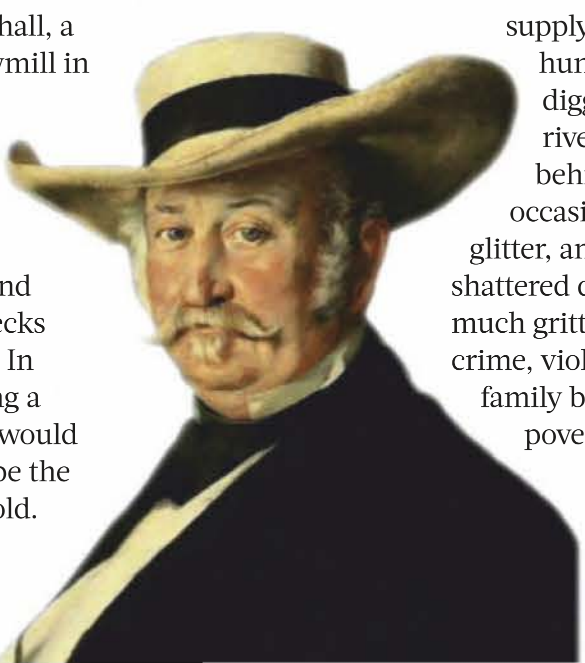
James W Marshall was the first to discover gold in California, in 1848

Technically, Marshall was stood on Mexican land, but less than two weeks later, under the terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo that ended the Mexico-American War, California joined the US. Soon it was the most talked about location on the planet, and people were sailing oceans, traversing mountains and driving wagons across deserts to get there.

Marshall made nothing from his discovery – in fact, he and the sawmill owner, John Sutter (who had borrowed big time to finance his dream of building an agricultural empire) lost money and went bust, after workers deserted fields and factories to dig for gold. Other business folk, however, would soon seize the gilt-edged opportunity presented by the influx of wide-eyed, greenhorn prospectors who descended on California.

American culture continues to celebrate the more spectacular rags-to-riches success stories that emerged from this era the sassy smarts and big-picture thinking of entrepreneurs like Samuel Brannan, John Studebaker and Levi Strauss. But these men struck gold by supplying equipment to the fortune hunters and dreamers, not by digging dirt or scouring riverbanks themselves. And behind the lucky strikes and occasional flashes of life-changing glitter, amid the rubble of a million shattered dreams, lie a multitude of much grittier and grimy stories of crime, violence, prostitution, gambling, family breakdown, bankruptcy, poverty, pestilence and prejudice.

Positive results were achieved too, of course – including the



John Sutter operated a mill at the site where the Californian gold was found; his workers promptly abandoned him to seek their own fortunes

AKG-IMAGES X1, ALAMY X2, BRIDGEMAN IMAGES X1, GETTY IMAGES X2

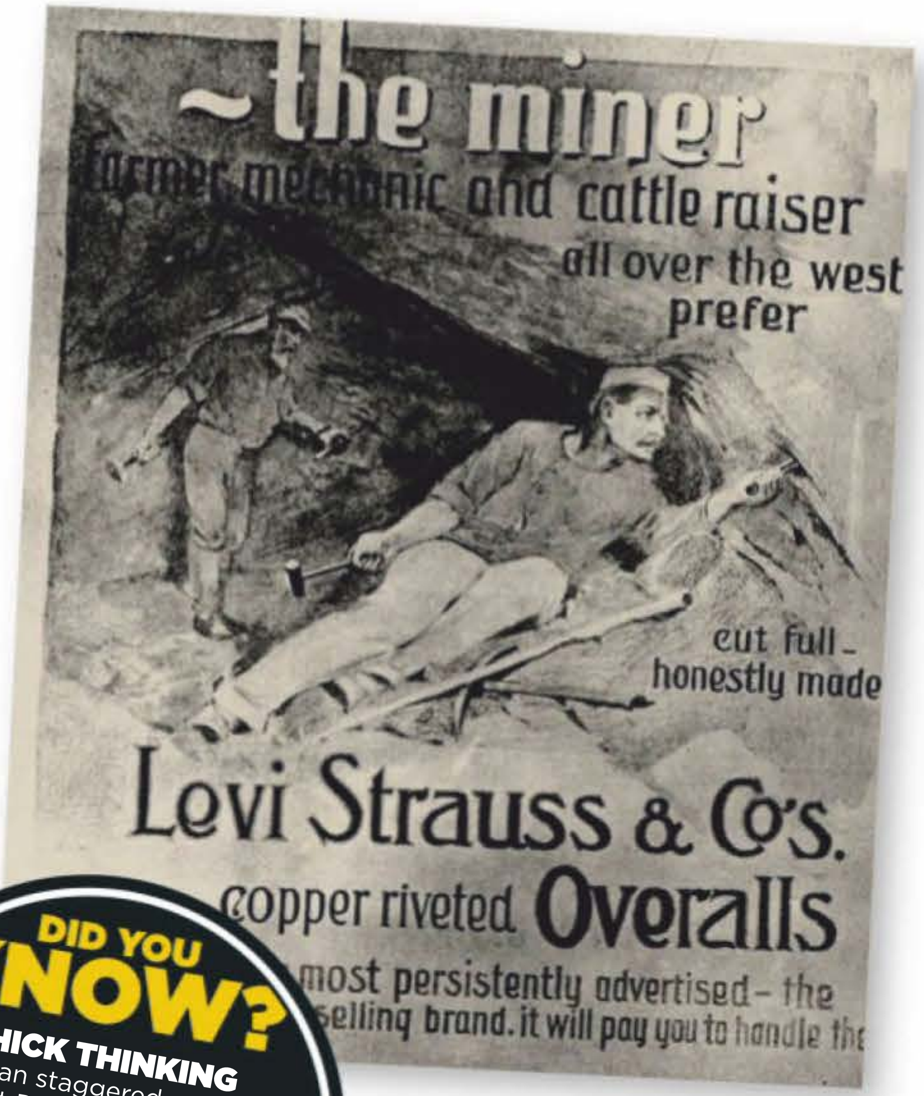
ABOVE: **Those panning for gold hoped to fish flecks from rivers, but the only surefire way to strike it rich was to be the person selling the pans**

BELOW: **Several thousand fortune hunters made their way to California in 1848 alone**

development of railways and other infrastructure – but it's the darker themes that are the common denominators across the gold-rush age. In the colony of Victoria, reactions to the arrival of Chinese prospectors laid the roots for the discriminatory 'White Australia' policy (which, between 1901 and 1958, effectively stopped all non-white immigration into the country), while in South Africa tensions and rivalry between the British colonial authorities and local Boer farmers over the goldfields led to a full-scale war.

HARD TO BE HERD

The first thing aspirant prospectors had to survive was the journey to the goldfields. As word of a gold strike spread across the Americas and beyond during 1848, hundreds of hopefuls began travelling towards California. The initial trickle of what became a rush was led by Americans from Oregon, but soon thousands were flocking in from places like Mexico, Chile, Peru and the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii). Nicknamed 'Argonauts' after the golden fleece chasing heroes of Greek mythology, around 6,000 people arrived that year. ▶

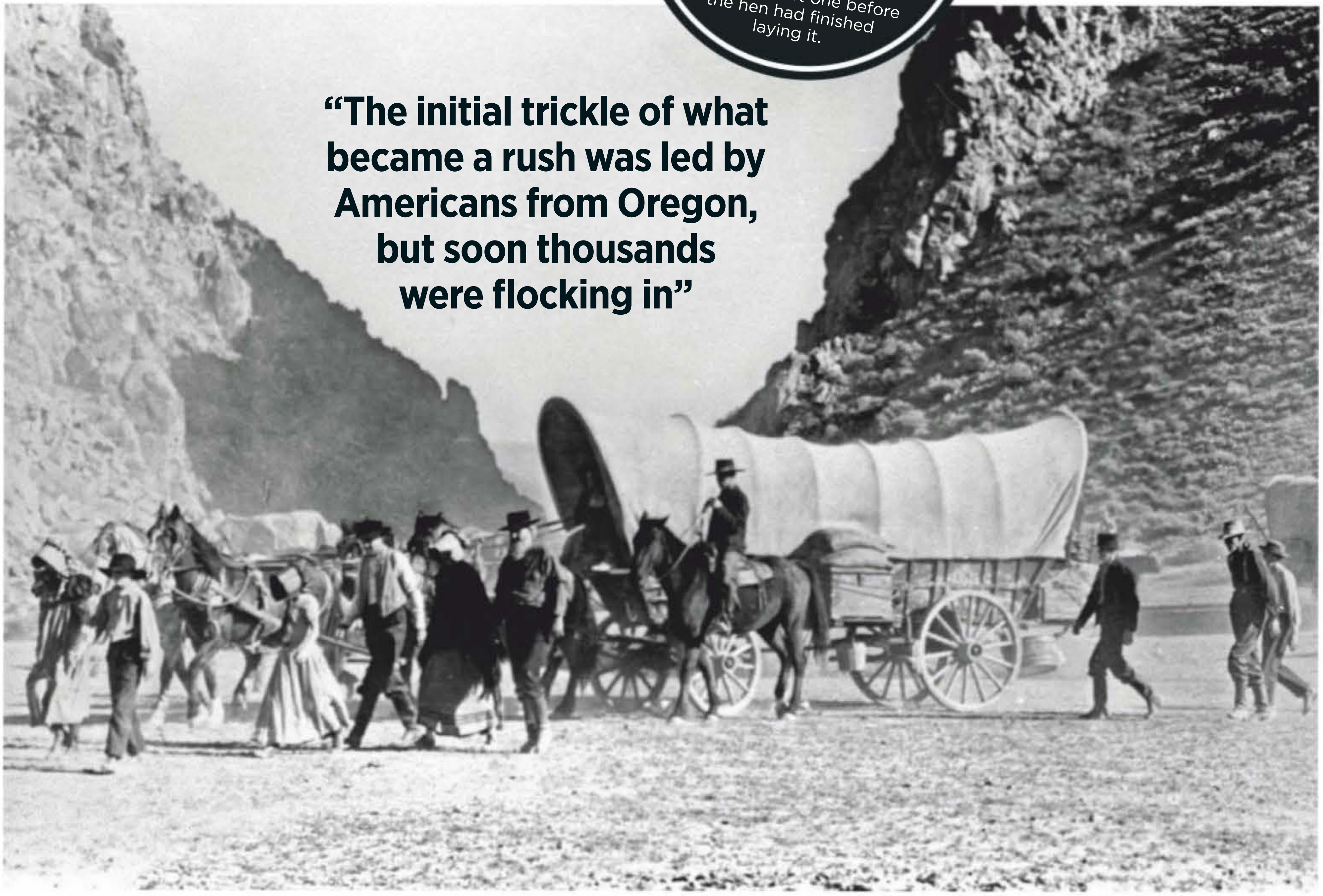

~the miner
farmer, mechanic and cattle raiser
all over the west
prefer
cut full-
honestly made
Levi Strauss & Co's.
copper riveted Overalls
most persistently advertised – the
selling brand. it will pay you to handle the

ABOVE: **Levi Strauss (most famous today for his jeans) made his fortune supplying miners in San Francisco**

DID YOU KNOW?

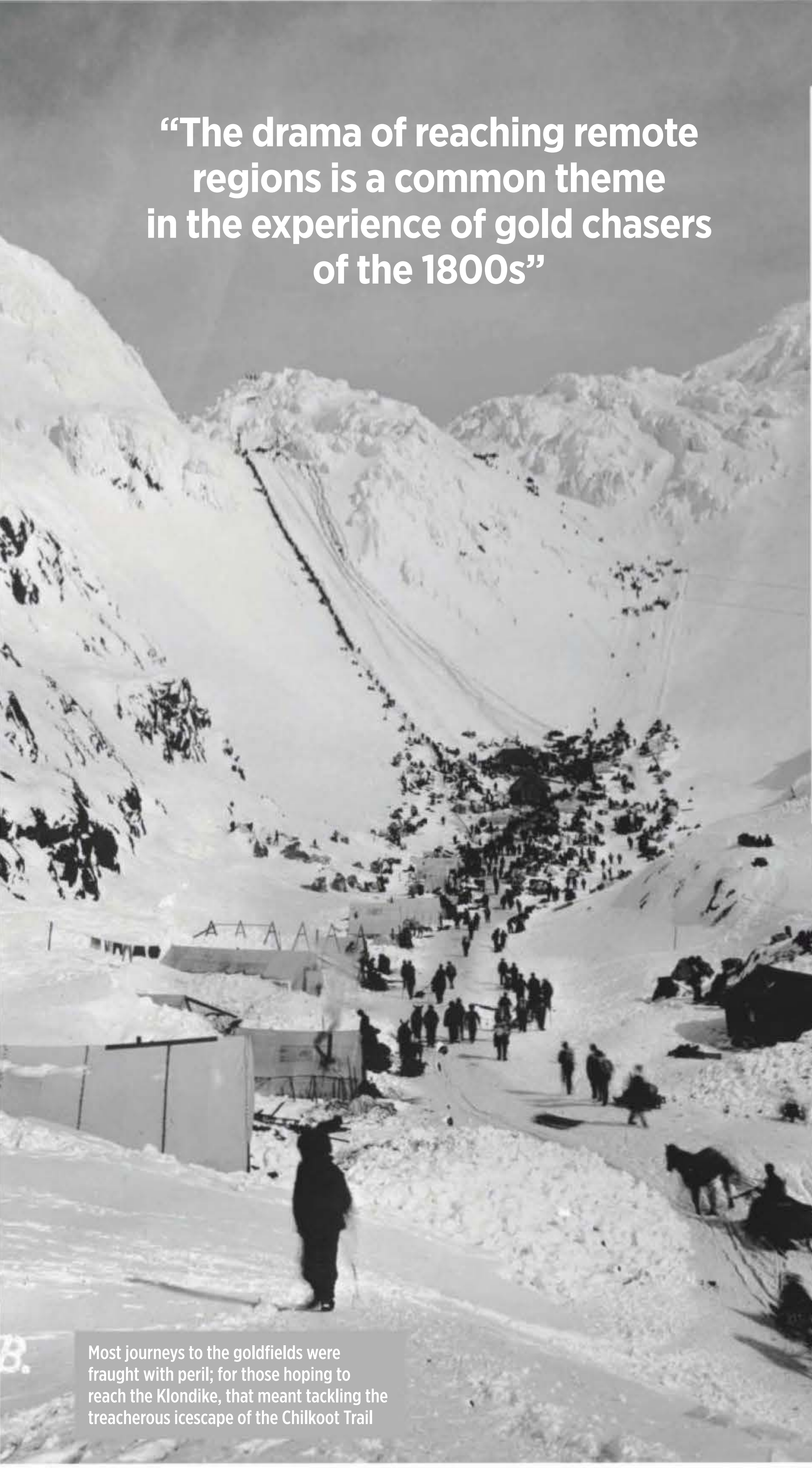
CHICK THINKING

One man staggered over the Chilkoot Pass carrying a crate of live chickens. Once he arrived in Dawson he started selling their freshly laid eggs – he received $5 for the first one before the hen had finished laying it.

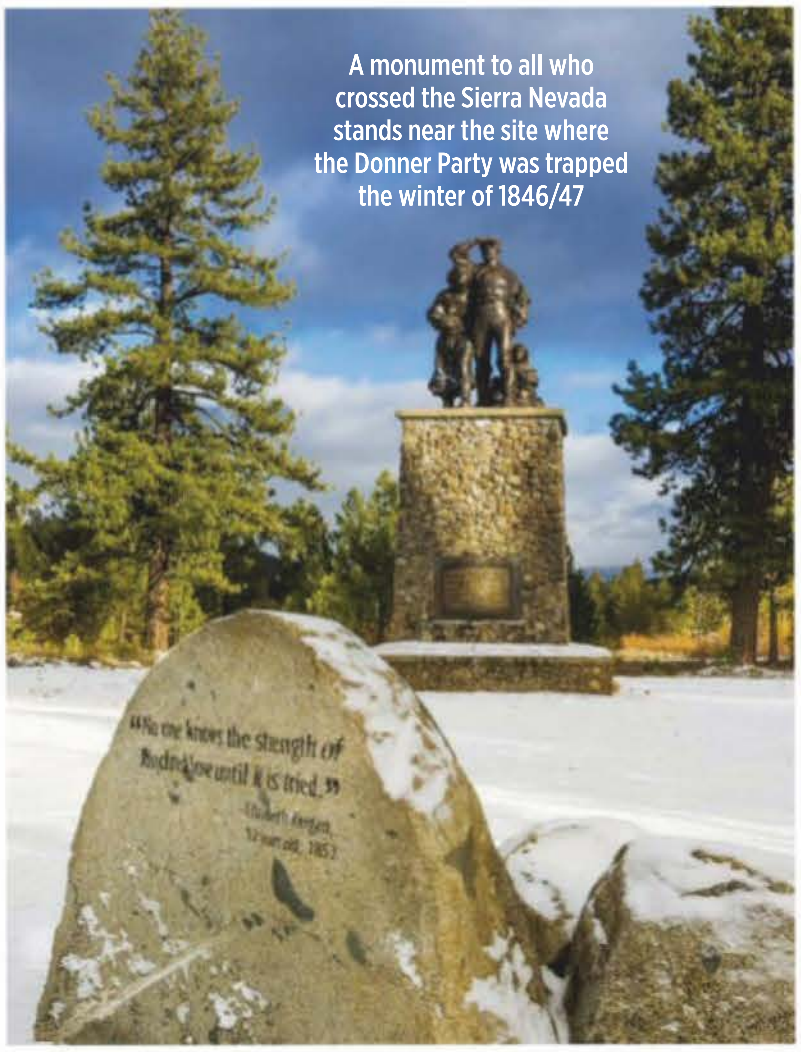


"The initial trickle of what became a rush was led by Americans from Oregon, but soon thousands were flocking in"

> “The drama of reaching remote regions is a common theme in the experience of gold chasers of the 1800s”



Most journeys to the goldfields were fraught with peril; for those hoping to reach the Klondike, that meant tackling the treacherous icescape of the Chilkoot Trail



A monument to all who crossed the Sierra Nevada stands near the site where the Donner Party was trapped the winter of 1846/47

◀ In his State of the Union address in December 1848, US President James Polk confirmed that large quantities of gold had been discovered in California, prompting a big dash west that emptied work places and homes across the rest of the country, and much further afield. Factories and shops lost workers, soldiers went AWOL, husbands deserted families. Part of the collateral damage of the gold-rush era was a rash of broken homes and destitute businesses far from the goldfields.

Thousands of hopefuls from the eastern states set off on a tough transcontinental odyssey in covered wagons, pulled by mules and oxen. They were soon joined by people from Asia, Europe and the Antipodes. By 1849, the real rush had begun, with incoming waves of ‘forty-niners’ breaking on the beaches. Around 90,000 arrived that year.

But no easy route to the goldfields existed, even for those travelling across America along the California Trail. With

BOOMTOWN BLUES

Lying to east of the Sierra Nevada mountain range, Bodie was a classic gold-rush boomtown, with a population that went from a few hundred to around 7,000 within two years of a deposit of gold-bearing ore being discovered in 1876. Gold worth nearly $34 million was extracted from Bodie’s mines, but by 1920 only 120 people remained. Now it’s preserved as an authentic Wild West ghost town for tourists.

LEFT & MAIN: **Californian authorities maintain the ghost town of Bodie in a state of ‘arrested decay’, with mining mills and detritus in open view**

LAW OFFICES
WHITE, DAVEY AND TOBIN
GOLD DUST BOUGHT AND SOLD
GOLD DUST BOUGHT

At the height of the Klondike gold rush, Dawson City in Canada became a sprawling urban centre with a fully fledged high street

deserts and the Rockies standing in their way, timing was crucial. The tragic story of the Donner party – a group of wagon train settlers heading west who had become snowbound in the Sierra Nevada mountain range during the winter of 1846/47 – was infamous. Just 48 of the party's 87 travellers made it out alive.

Others travelled up through Mexico, or took a ship – either on a full 17,000 mile route around the bottom of South America (which took between five and seven months) or to Panama's east coast, before crossing the jungle-clad isthmus and boarding boats on the Pacific side.

The latter route was much quicker, but prohibitively expensive. Either way, dangers included fierce storms and serious illness due to overcrowding and poor diet. Once they'd landed, prospectors who had come by boat would have been severely disappointed to learn the goldfields were a further 150 miles inland, and that they had to negotiate another journey before they could start fossicking for their fortunes.

The drama of reaching remote regions is a common theme in the experience of gold chasers of the 1800s, and the ordeal faced by those heading to California pales in comparison to the challenge that faced stampeders who joined the last great rush of the century to the Klondike, in north-western Canada. After landing in Alaska, these fortune seekers had to hike the Chilkoot Trail over ice clad mountains, then build boats to negotiate the mighty Yukon River, through deadly rapids, before reaching Dawson where they could finally begin digging.

None of this deterred those with gold goggles on, though. Within six quick years, San Francisco was transformed from a small settlement with around 200 residents in 1846, to a ramshackle city teeming with more than 36,000 people in 1852. By 1855, the population had exceeded 300,000.

BOOM AND GLOOM

New arrivals to San Francisco lived in ad hoc accommodation, including on the decks of the 500 or so ships that had turned up laden with would-be prospectors and supplies, and then became stranded in the harbour when the crews deserted to try their luck in the goldfields. These abandoned boats housed shops, warehouses, pubs and even a jail.

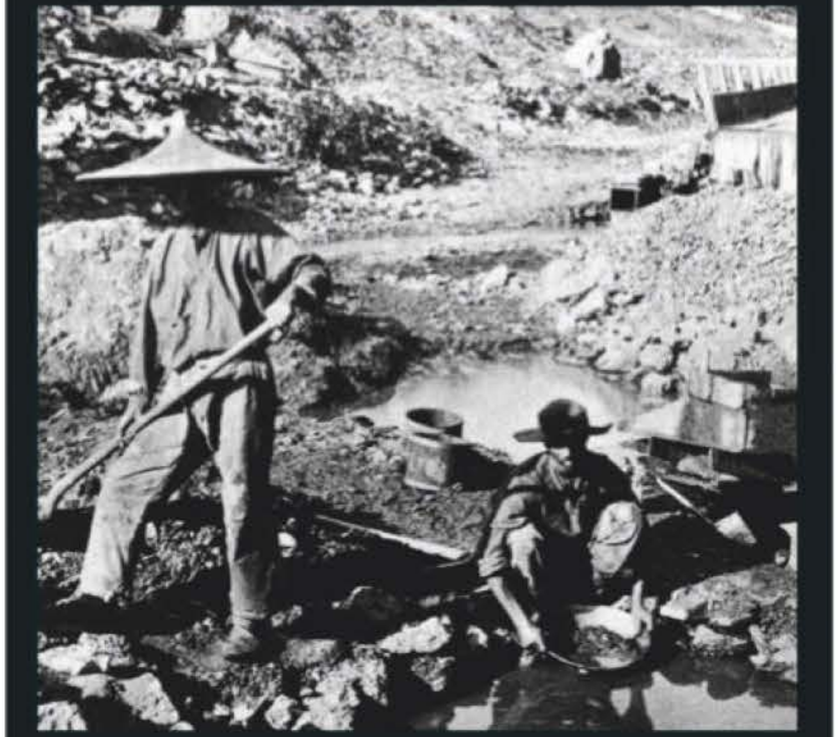
Many migrants spent all their savings getting to the west coast, and arrived utterly destitute. The rush created enormous surges in demand for basic supplies, and prices soared. By the end of the century, having learned from events in California, Canadian authorities insisted prospectors bring a year's worth of supplies before allowing them access from Alaska into the Klondike. But many of those arriving in San Francisco were woefully ill prepared.

Freezing winter conditions could be lethal for those living in shanty conditions and sleeping on cold, damp floors. Food was poor, scurvy was common from lack of fruit and vegetables, and sanitation was extremely basic, with most men seldom washing their bodies or

Continues on p34

WHY WERE PEOPLE SO KEEN TO JOIN THE GOLD RUSH?

In an era of rapid social and political change, not to mention industrialisation, leaving everything behind to chase a dream proved sorely tempting...



Famine ravaged Ireland in the 1840s, which in the ensuing decades would cause half the population to leave or die. Meanwhile revolutions raged across continental Europe during the People's Spring, with authorities responding ferociously, forcing many participants into exile. Slaves were being emancipated across the British Empire and North America, and in China large sections of the population experienced displacement as a result of various conflicts, including the Opium Wars.

International travel had been hitherto unimaginable for the vast majority of the planet's population, but in the middle of the 19th century tens of thousands found themselves uprooted, and world news (increasingly, as the century progressed, accompanied by photos) was being spread, shared and consumed by ever-more people.

In such conditions, news of a gold strike was enough to induce young men to up sticks, buy picks and do whatever it took to travel to the ends of the earth on wild, life-changing adventures. The result was people from extraordinarily divergent backgrounds – from Chinese fishermen to Cornish miners – rubbed shoulders in rudimentary settlements and on neighbouring claims in remote regions.

This phenomenon had a sizable impact on both the societies the men were leaving (in numbers not usually seen in peacetime) and the places they travelled to. The discovery of gold in the American River, for example, directly led to the largest migration of people the US had ever seen. These migrant miners brought many things with them – from ideas, innovations and cultural influences to new diseases. Around the camps and embryonic townships, supply industries developed, chiefly around prostitution, booze and gambling, all of which profoundly impacted the local population, and usually negatively.

Some settlements would briefly boom and bloom, before turning into ghost towns within a few short years. Others endured and evolved into enormous metropolises – San Francisco, Johannesburg and Melbourne were all built on solid gold foundations.

ALAMY X1, BRIDGEMAN IMAGES X1, GETTY IMAGES X4

MAJOR GOLD RUSHES OF THE 19TH CENTURY

1
2
3
4
5
6
EL PARAMO
TIERRA DEL FUEGO
POPPER
1889

NOME, ALASKA (1899–1909)

In September 1898, the 'Three Lucky Swedes' (Erik Lindblom, John Brynteson and Norwegian-American Jafet Lindeberg) discovered gold on Anvil Creek and founded Nome mining district. Soon, however, more gold was spotted simply lying in the beach sand, extractable without the need for a claim. By 1900, a tent city sprawled across 30 miles of the treeless coast, and Nome's population hit 20,000; it dropped to 2,600 by 1909.

YUKON TERRITORY, CANADA (1896–99)

To reach the Klondike goldfields, stampeders had to sail into the Alaskan ports of Dyea or Skagway, cross the Chilkoot or White Pass mountain trails to Whitehorse, then build boats to negotiate 450 miles of the fast-flowing Yukon River to Dawson – all while carrying a ton of equipment (Canadian authorities insisted miners travel with a year's supplies). Still, 100,000 made the journey, including author Jack London (*White Fang, The Call of the Wild*). The native Hän people were moved to a reservation and many died.

TIERRA DEL FUEGO, CHILE & ARGENTINA (1883–1906)

Bizarrely, the gold rush that sent prospectors to the bottom of South America began with a shipwreck. After the French steamship *Arctique* ran aground on Cape Virgenes, a rescue expedition discovered gold at Zanja a Pique. News of this travelled through Punta Arenas to Santiago, Buenos Aires and beyond, and soon a stream of fortune-hunting Chileans, Argentines and Europeans (especially Dalmatians) were en route to the Antarctic-facing archipelago.

WITWATERSRAND, SOUTH AFRICA (1886)

The discovery of the world's largest gold deposit on a Transvaal farm, Langlaagte – controversially credited to prospector, George Harrison – prompted a huge rush, which birthed the city of Johannesburg. In ten years, South African gold production went from zero to 23 per cent of global output. Conflict flared between Afrikaan Boers and the British, resulting in the Jameson Raid, in which the British botched an attempt to seize the goldfields from the South African Republic, ultimately leading to the Second Boer War of 1899–1902.

GOLD RUSHES ALSO HAPPENED IN...

1 SOUTH DAKOTA, US

An 1874 expedition into the Black Hills of Dakota Territory (now South Dakota), led by the ill-fated George Custer, found gold on French Creek. The resulting boom created the city of Deadwood and 'the Homestake', the US's biggest gold mine. This was, however, all at the expense of the Lakota Sioux people.

2 NORTH CAROLINA, US

In 1799, 12-year-old Conrad Reed found a 17lb (7.7kg) gold nugget in Cabarrus County, North Carolina. His father then used it as a doorstop for years, until a visiting jeweller realised it was gold and bought it. News of that sale prompted the 1802 Carolina gold rush.

3 GEORGIA, US

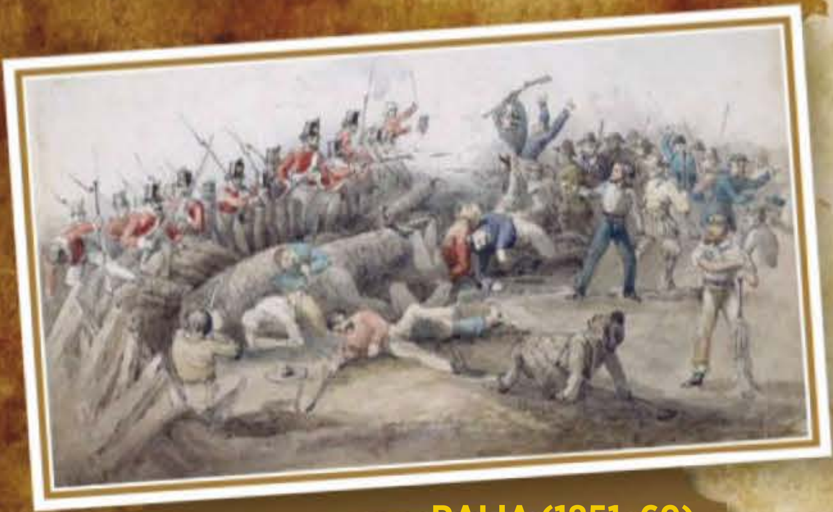
Gold had been known to exist near Dahlonega, Georgia, since the 1540 expedition of Spanish conquistador Hernando de Soto. After several strikes in the 1830s, however, the number of migrant miners in the area caused conflict with the local Cherokee people, ultimately leading to their forced removals in the 'Trail of Tears'.

ALAMY X3, GETTY IMAGES X1

DID YOU KNOW?

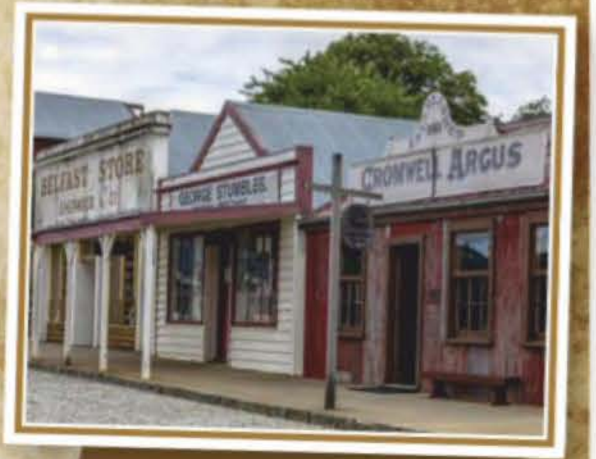
FLIGHTS OF FANCY

The Klondike gold rush coincided with the great bicycle boom, and several people attempted to cycle to Dawson. There were also grand plans to fly paying prospectors to the remote goldfields in balloons – none of which really got off the ground.



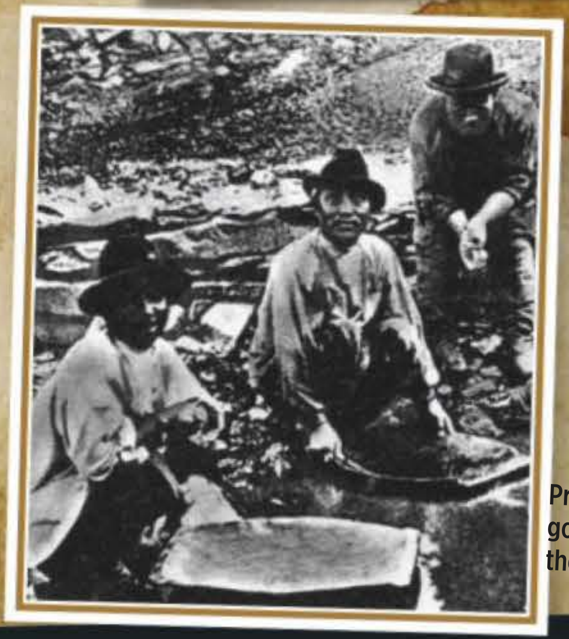
VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA (1851–69)

The 1851 discovery of gold at Poverty Point in Ballarat, Victoria, prompted Australia's biggest gold rush and established Melbourne as a world-leading city. Gold from the tiny, infant colony of Victoria cleared all Britain's foreign debts – in 1856 alone, 94,982kg of gold was extracted. It was also a period of national development, with events at Eureka Stockade in 1854 (*pictured above*), when miners rebelled against colonial authorities over the price of their mining licences, becoming seminal in the development of Australian democracy and identity, while adverse reactions to Chinese miners led to the country's racist 'White Australia' policy.



OTAGO, NEW ZEALAND (1861–64)

After Australian Gabriel Read got lucky in what became known as Gabriel's Gully, claims spread across New Zealand's Central Otago region. Foreign miners flocked in, some straight from the fading goldfields of California and Australia, swelling the region's population by 400 per cent and temporarily turning Dunedin into the country's largest city. Later strikes near Cromwell (*above*) and Arthur's Point attracted more, with an estimated 18,000 miners active by 1864. The rush fizzled fast, but bankrolled the building of New Zealand's first university (Otago) in 1869.



Prospectors pan for gold in Siberia during the 19th century

IN NUMBERS

$36,000

The amount Samuel Brannan allegedly made in nine weeks by selling picks, pans and shovels to gold rushers en route from San Francisco to the goldfields.

40 MILLION OUNCES (113,398kg)

Weight of gold dug from the Homestake Mine in South Dakota between 1876 and 2002.

2,217 TROY OUNCES 16 PENNYWEIGHT (68.98kg)

Weight of the 'Welcome Nugget' found in 1858 at Bakery Hill, Ballarat in Australia by a group of 22 Cornish miners working at the mine of the Red Hill Mining Company.

3%

Proportion of the non-native female population of California's mining region in 1850 – approximately 800 women compared to 30,000 men.

$200 MILLION

US dollar value of gold dug out of California's Sierra Nevada mountains between 1849 and 1852 – equivalent to around $5.5 billion today.

85.7g

Heaviest lump of gold discovered in Britain, located in July 2018 by an amateur prospector in a Scottish river. Prior to this, the largest nugget found in British waters was discovered in Cornwall in 1808 and weighed 59g.

4 OURO PRETO, BRAZIL

From its beginnings in the 1690s, right through the heyday of the Portuguese Empire and up to the opening of the British-owned St John d'el Rey Mining Company in 1830, Ouro Preto experienced the longest gold rush in history, producing South America's largest gold mines.

5 HIGHLANDS, SCOTLAND

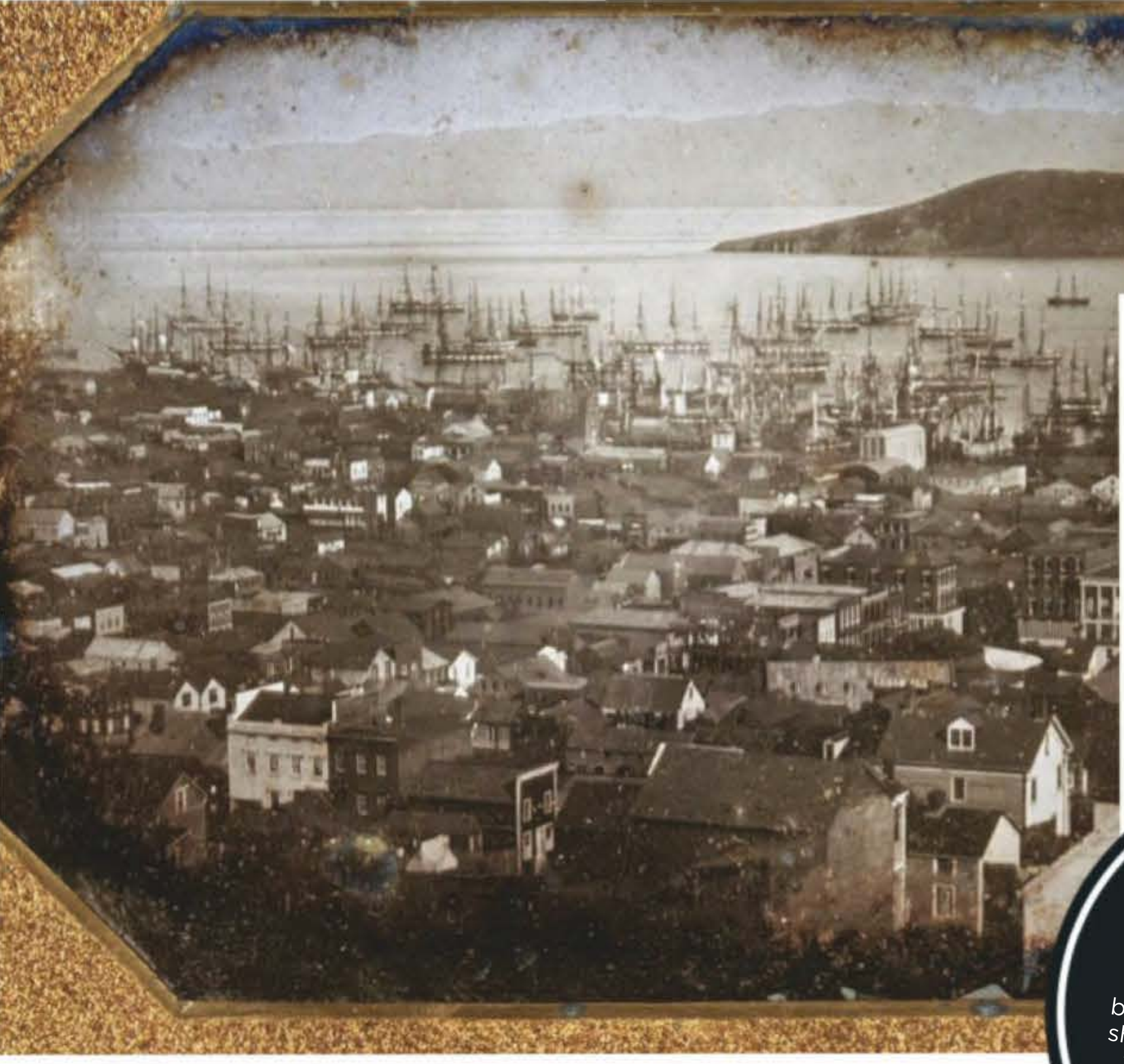
In 1868, Robert Nelson Gilchrist – a local recently returned from 17 years in the goldfields of Australia – discovered gold in Kildonan in the Scottish Highlands. Subsequent finds were made in the Suisgill and Kildonan Burns (watercourses), and within six months more than 600 fortune hunters were panning in the remote glen.

6 IVALO GOLD RUSH, LAPLAND

When gold was discovered in the Ivalojoki River valley in Lapland in the 1870s, it prompted a rush of prospectors into the Grand Duchy of Finland, then part of Imperial Russia.

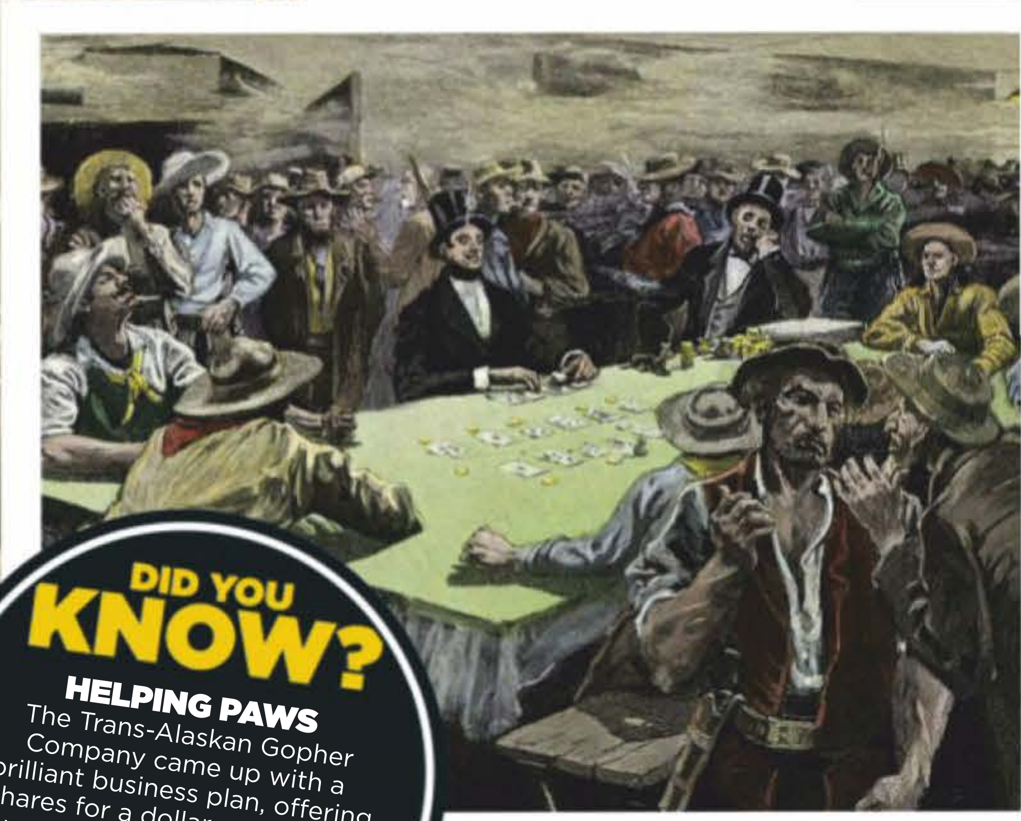
7 SIBERIA

According to one story, the 19th century Siberian gold rush began when a hunter spotted gold among the sand in the innards of a grouse he'd shot. During the rush, which peaked in the 1830s and 40s, Russia produced 40 per cent of the world's gold (compared to 1 per cent in 1801).



LEFT: **San Francisco harbour in 1851, by which time many of these boats would have been transformed into static shops, stores and living quarters**

BELOW: **Gambling was a popular pastime in gold-rush era California, with arguments and violence a common outcome**



clothes. Camps were rag-tag constructions made from wood and canvass, and fires were common.

In this male-dominated society, almost entirely devoid of traditional calming influences such as family and community, gambling, alcohol abuse and loneliness were also prevalent issues. Later, in the Yukon, one entrepreneurial prospector travelled with a barge-load of kittens that he sold to lonesome miners in Dawson for an ounce of gold apiece. Most men, however, sought solace and warmth elsewhere.

LOVE, LUST AND PUNISHMENT

San Francisco's so-called Barbary Coast area witnessed the shadier side of the Californian gold rush. Here, in the brothels, saloon bars and gaming houses that quickly took root in the rough dirt, plenty of prospectors frittered away their newfound fortunes. Prostitution became a huge industry. Initially, the working women came from Latin America, mostly Mexico, Nicaragua and Chile, and a rudimentary red light zone was established at the foot of San Francisco's Telegraph Hill, in a tent city called Chiletown. Later, more women would arrive from farther afield, including a large number from France.

Among the Chinese community – largely comprised of men who'd left families intending to make a short, life-changing trip to California, but ended up staying much longer – the gender imbalance was especially stark. According to historian and author Judy Yung, in 1850 just seven of the 4,025 Chinese in San Francisco were women. There are reports of girls – often aged 14 or younger – being lured or kidnapped from the Chinese countryside and brought to St Louis Alley in San Francisco's Chinatown, where they were effectively sold to prospectors as sex slaves, or put to work in brothels.

In the early days, the goldfields were rule-free places, full of testosterone and desperation, where infrastructure and policing were non-existent. Claims – parcels of land where prospectors asserted the right to extract gold – were staked on a first-come basis and disputes were resolved with violence. And along with all the hope-filled miners and desperate dreamers came the schemers: thieves, bandits, claim-jumpers, professional gamblers and scammers.

California didn't become a state until September 1850, until which time there were literally no laws, and summary and violent vigilante justice was meted out to wrongdoers (and perceived wrongdoers) on the spot. Punishments ranged from flogging for minor crimes (petty theft and assault), right up to execution by hanging for more serious offences such as robbery and murder. Lynchings and mob justice were rife.

As the situation evolved, so too did law and order. In crowded camps around productive claims, officers were often appointed to patrol mines and settle disputes. Commonly, claims were 10ft by 10ft, and limited to one per prospector. As the era wore on, however, and the number of miners continued to rise and, as the strike rate fell, things inevitably turned nasty.

DIVERSITY AND DISCRIMINATION

The deluge of hungry humanity that flowed into San Francisco in search of gold from 1849 made California one of the most cosmopolitan and colourful places in the world albeit probably one of the planet's most male dominated societies.

The ethnic mix included thousands of Chinese, Mexicans and people from Caribbean, Central and South American countries, including Brazil, Peru and Chile. Fortune-foragers travelled from as far away as New Zealand and South Africa.

Australia lost so many young, able-bodied men during this stampede to America's west coast that it forced the colonial government to reverse its policy of suppressing news about gold strikes in its own backyard. Consequently, Australia's fortunes and fate was quickly transformed by a series of gold rushes in New South Wales and Victoria, which happened shortly after that of California.

Ireland was still losing people as a result of the Great Famine, and those

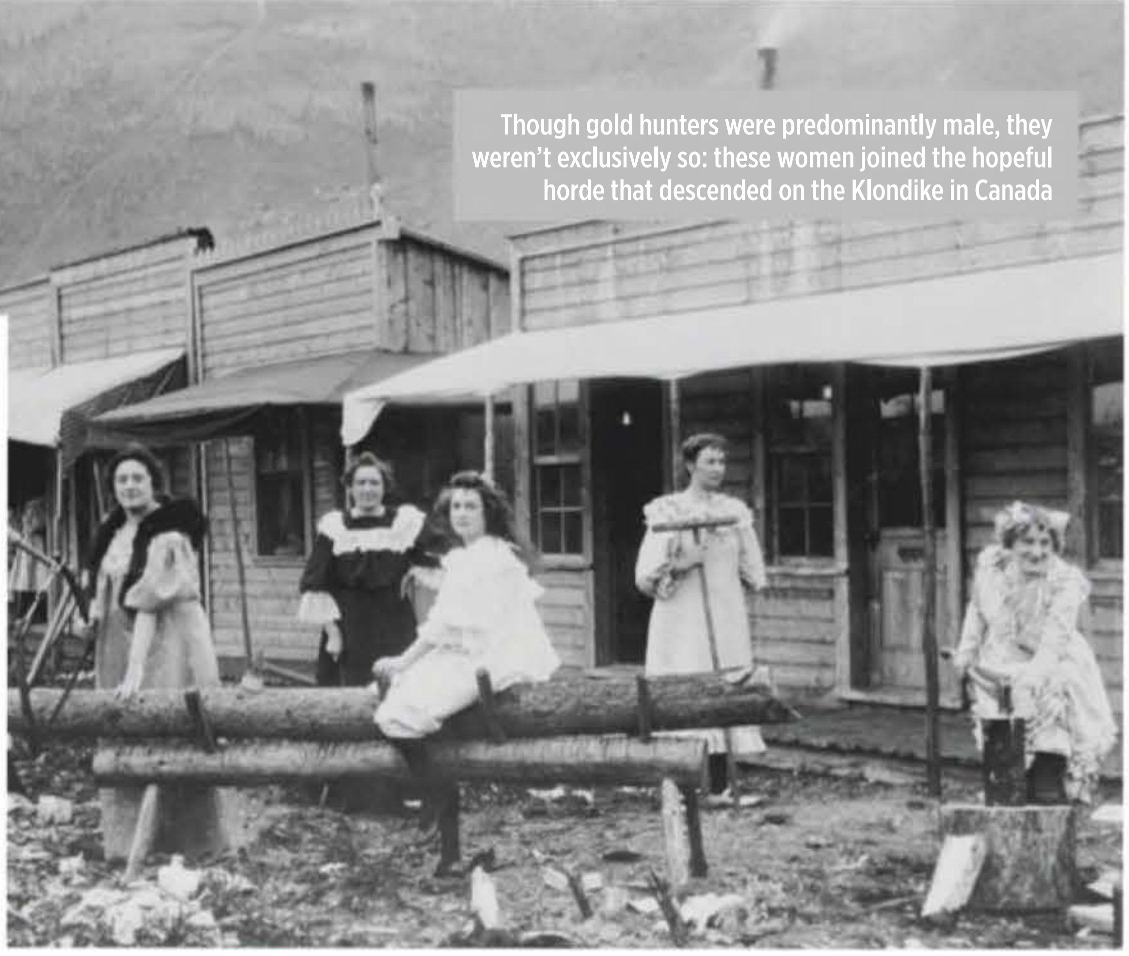
DID YOU KNOW?

HELPING PAWS

The Trans-Alaskan Gopher Company came up with a brilliant business plan, offering shares for a dollar apiece in its venture, which promised to train gophers to dig tunnels in the Klondike goldfields. Gophering for gold, if you will...

Five Chilkat porters pose with a miner and two oxen on the Dyea Trail, c1897, on their way to the Klondike

ALAMY X1, GETTY IMAGES X4



Though gold hunters were predominantly male, they weren't exclusively so: these women joined the hopeful horde that descended on the Klondike in Canada

who could made their way to the west coast. From elsewhere in Europe, prospectors poured in from Italy, Prussia, Russia, France, Britain and Spain. Several hundred Turks and Filipinos arrived too, and among migrants from other states in American were an estimated 4,000 African-Americans.

Once the easy pickings had been harvested, however, white American prospectors began trying to force foreigners out of the picture so they could gather the remaining gold. Chinese and Latin American miners were sometimes attacked, and a foreign miners' tax of $20 per month was introduced by the new California State Legislature.

Anti-immigrant feeling ran rife but it was Native American communities who suffered the worst atrocities. Thousands died from diseases brought in on the international tide, as well as violent attacks from prospectors who regarded them as sub-human savages. California was a free state (one in which slavery was prohibited) but settlers were allowed to capture and use indigenous women and children as bonded workers.

> **"Once the easy pickings had been harvested, white Americans began trying to force foreigners out of the picture"**

As gold prospectors transitioned into settlers, and agriculture expanded to meet their ever-growing needs, conflict intensified. Attacks by tribes on encroaching miners and ranchers resulted in vengeance being wrought on whole villages, and some gold-rush era Californian communities offered bounties to vigilante groups for Native American scalps. California's first governor, Peter Hardeman Burnett, called for the exclusion of all black people from the state, championed high taxation on foreign workers and openly advocated the wholesale extermination of the Native American population. By 1890, this latter objective had all-but been achieved, with the indigenous population decimated.

This was mirrored in Australian gold rushes, where the problems settlers were already causing the Aboriginal population in the form of introduced disease, conflict, alcohol abuse and the destruction of their homeland were massively amplified by the arrival of thousands of fortune hunters.

There is some evidence, though, that not all indigenous people were limited to being bystanders or victims, and some were able to exploit elements of the situation by selling possum skin cloaks to freezing miners ill-prepared for winter conditions, working as trackers for prospectors and police, and even putting on Corroborees (shows of dancing and singing) for payment. Overwhelmingly, though, the discovery of gold and subsequent influx of prospectors into any area already populated spelt disaster for Native American communities and their culture. This was certainly the case for the Yukon's Hän First Nation people, who were displaced by stampeders during the Klondike gold rush, and never recovered.

END OF THE RAINBOW

Although San Francisco continued to grow, the aspirations of small-time diggers in California had realistically evaporated by 1855, and larger mining companies were left to extract the remaining gold with better technology. The discovery of silver in Nevada in 1859 kept fortune hunters rolling into the bayside area – including authors such as Mark Twain and Bret Harte, who documented the era – but the stampede ultimately became a trickle.

The gold-rush era was far from over, however, and for the next half a century adventurers from the world over would continue to seek their fortunes in far-away places, amid the high hills, dusty deserts and remote rivers in Australia, Alaska, Siberia, Canada, New Zealand, the Transvaal… anywhere that offered a glint or hint of hidden treasure. ⊙

HOW THE GOLD RUSH MADE MARK TWAIN

He proved a poor miner, but the hunt for glory still proved the crucible for 'the father of American literature'

In 1861, after being forced to leave his much-loved job as a steamboat pilot on the Mississippi by the outbreak of the American Civil War, and having briefly joined a Confederate militia, 25-year-old Samuel Clemens left Missouri and went west with his brother, Orion. The experiences that followed provided raw material for Clemens' book, *Roughing It*, written under a pen name: Mark Twain.

The brothers spent time in Salt Lake City, where Twain first tried mining (with little success). By December 1864 he was in San Francisco, socialising with several contemporary writers, including Ina Coolbrith and Bret Harte, the latter a master at transforming prospectors into literary characters in short stories.

While in gold country, Twain frequented the pocket-mining camp watering hole, the Angels Hotel. Here he chanced across a yarn about a gold-rush gambler and a leaping frog that became the basis of his short story *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County*, published to great acclaim (but with a different title) in *The New York Saturday Press* in November 1865. Although a hapless miner, Twain had struck his own seam of gold: the written word.

INSET ABOVE: **Mark Twain is famously (and unverifiably) believed to have said that a gold mine "is a hole in the ground with a liar standing next to it"**

GET HOOKED

LISTEN

BBC RADIO 4

Melvyn Bragg and guests discuss the California Gold Rush in an episode of *In Our Time*. *bbc.co.uk/programmes/b05nxgdd*

WATCH

BBC TWO

An adaptation of Eleanor Catton's 2013 Man Booker Prize-winning novel *The Luminaries*, set during the New Zealand Gold Rush of the 1860s, is due to air on BBC Two in May.

Deception, Conspiracy, Murder and Embedded Nazi Spies

VM KNOX
IN SPITE OF ALL
TERROR

VM KNOX
IF NECESSARY
ALONE

In Spite of All Terror is the first in a series of crime thrillers by V M Knox that mix historical fact, crime fiction and superb characterisations. Set in September 1940, when Britain stood alone against an imminent Nazi invasion, Reverend Clement Wisdom and other men from the restricted occupations, were called to join the covert Auxiliary Units. Based in East Sussex, these ordinary men by day will become saboteurs and assassins by night. Following the murders of several of Clement's team, he finds himself embroiled in the murky world of espionage where things are never what they seem.

"Fantastic read, kept me enthralled to the last page." Janet Laurence, Former Chair, British Crime Writers' Association.

If Necessary, Alone is the second thriller in the series. Clement Wisdom, now a Major in Special Duties Branch, Secret Intelligence Service, is sent to remote Caithness to investigate illicit encrypted radio transmissions. But as soon as he arrives there, an out-station wireless operator is found brutally murdered and Clement becomes entangled in a web of death and silence. Alone, and in the bitter Scottish winter, Clement must stay one step ahead of a killer if he is to remain alive.

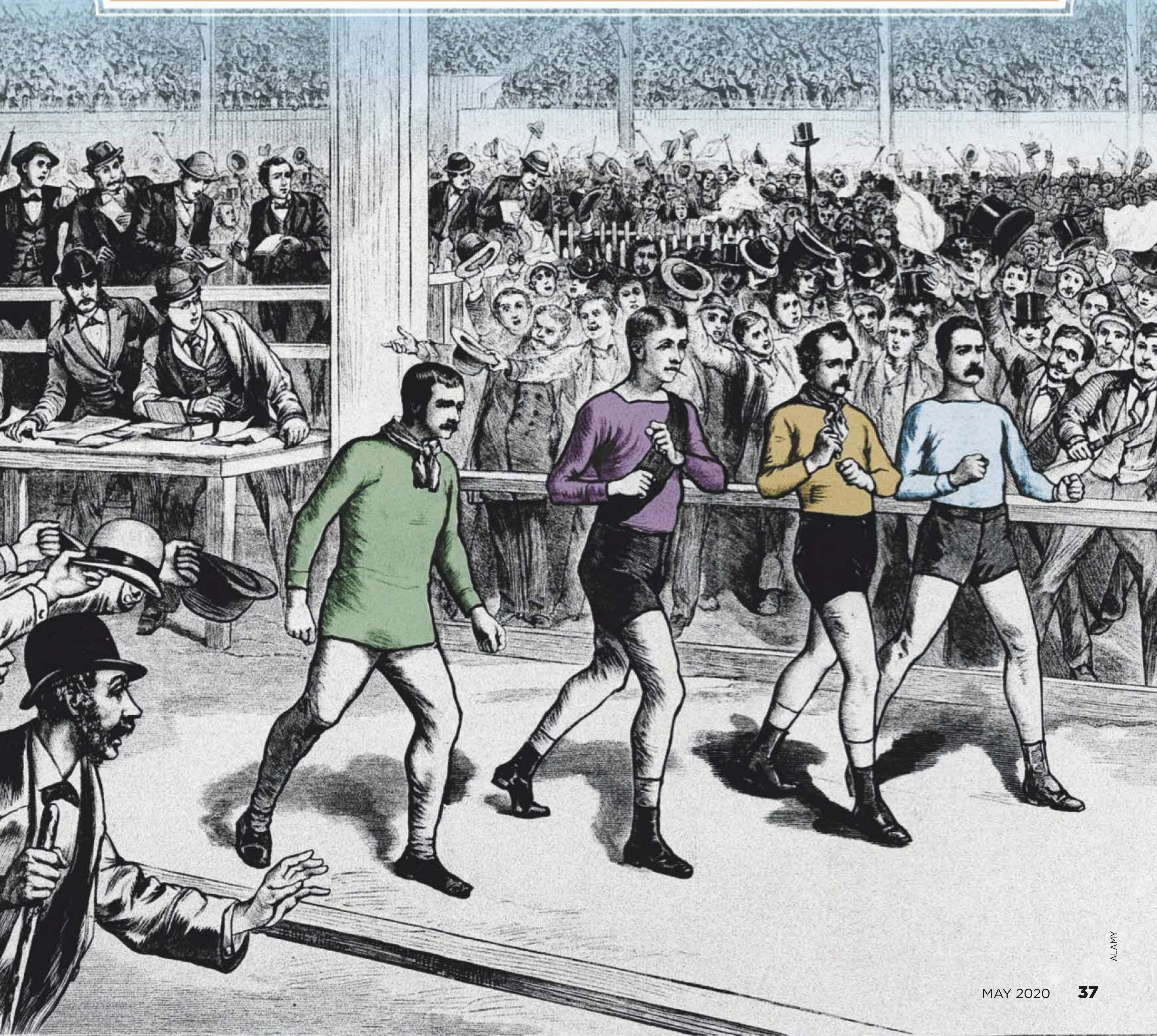
The third book in the series is coming soon.

"A thriller full of tension, treachery and twists. You won't put it down." Janet Laurence, Former Chair, British Crime Writers' Association.

Out now in paperback and ebook, and available from online booksellers, independent book shops and Waterstones.

On your marks, get set… walk!

Felicity Day tries out a favourite sport of the 18th and 19th centuries: competitive walking



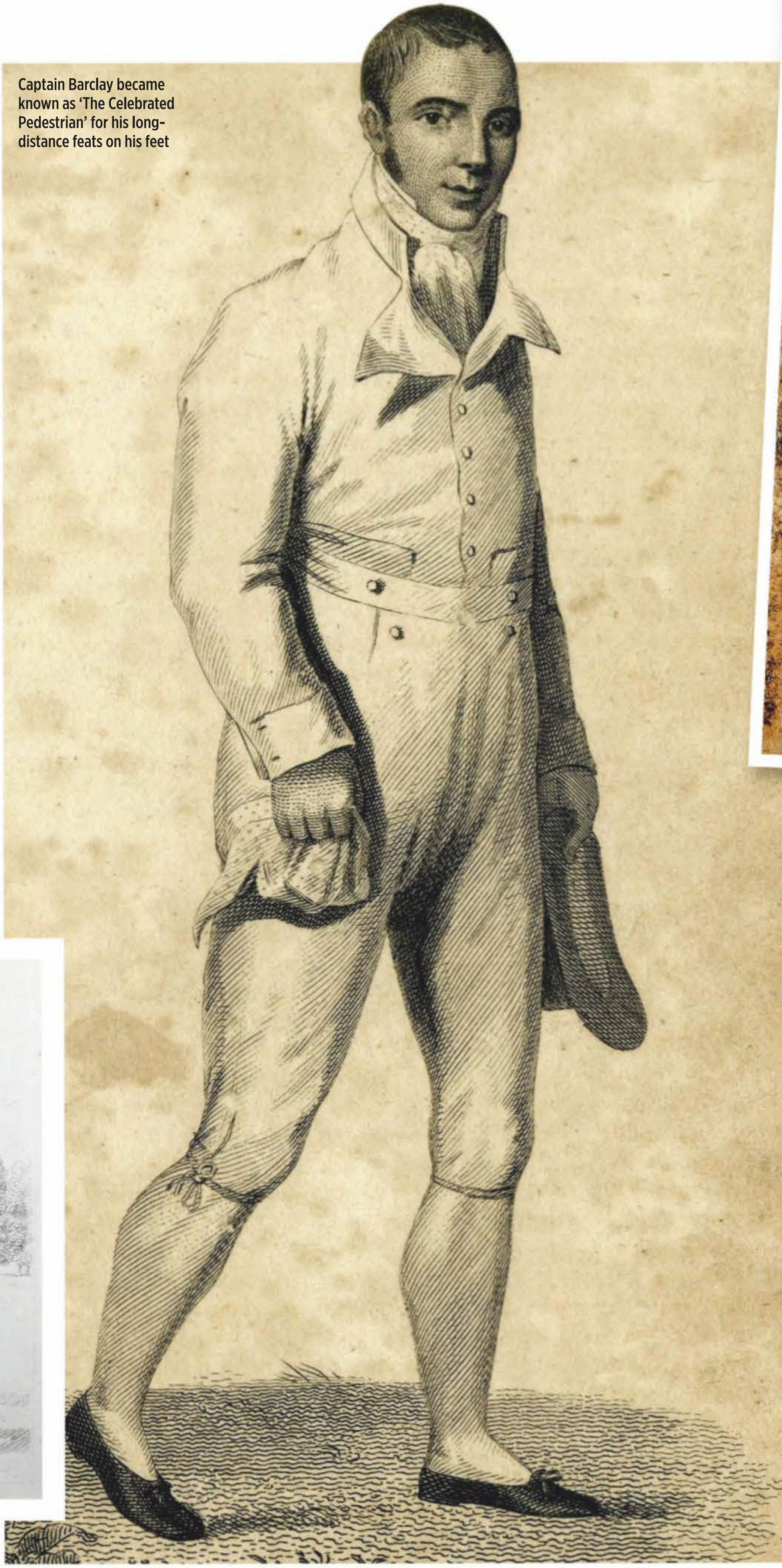
ALAMY

Captain Robert Barclay Allardice backed himself to complete an extraordinary feat of physical endurance. He would walk 1,000 miles in 1,000 successive hours for 1,000 guineas or more specifically, one mile in each and every hour of every day and night for almost six weeks. He would not sleep for more than an hour and a half at a time. The experts declared it impossible. But by mid afternoon on 12 July 1809, the Scotsman was on the brink of proving them wrong.

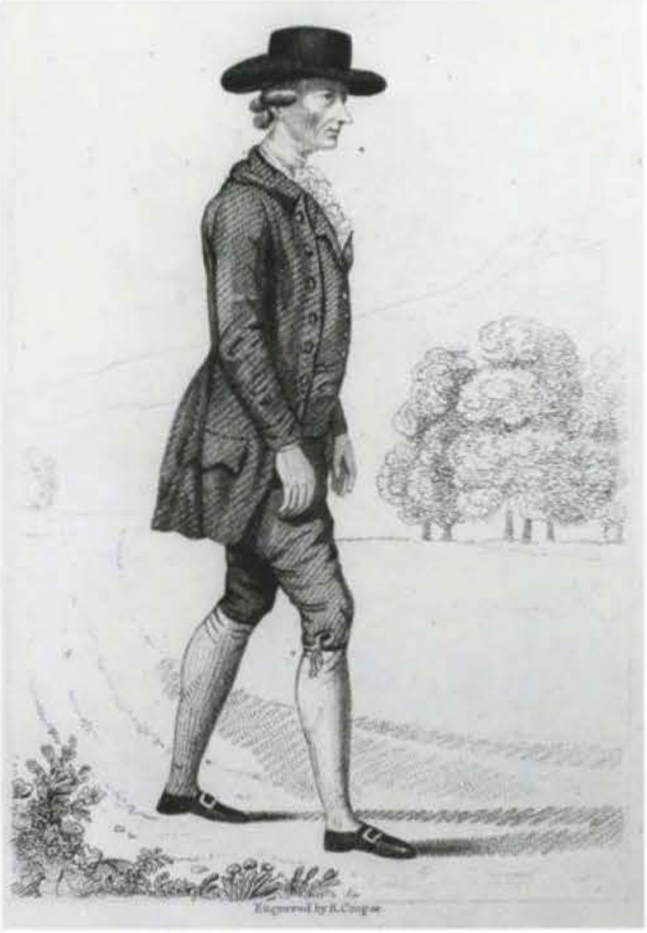
As Captain Barclay (as he was popularly known) completed the final mile, heaving his stiff and aching body over the line at 3.37pm 23 minutes within time thousands of spectators crammed onto Newmarket Heath, Suffolk, let out an almighty roar and the town's church bells rang out in celebration. The captain's loyal servant, William Cross, prepared a hot bath for his employer, who was more than two stone lighter than when he had set out, his swollen legs ready to collapse with exhaustion. He was also more than 16,000 guineas richer, thanks to a multitude of side bets. Most importantly, Captain Barclay had become the undisputed king of the pedestrians the men and women routinely walking incredibly long distances against the clock, their challenges the forerunners to today's marathons and ultra marathons.

FOR FANS AND GAMBLERS

Pedestrianism itself was nothing new when Barclay took to his feet; humans

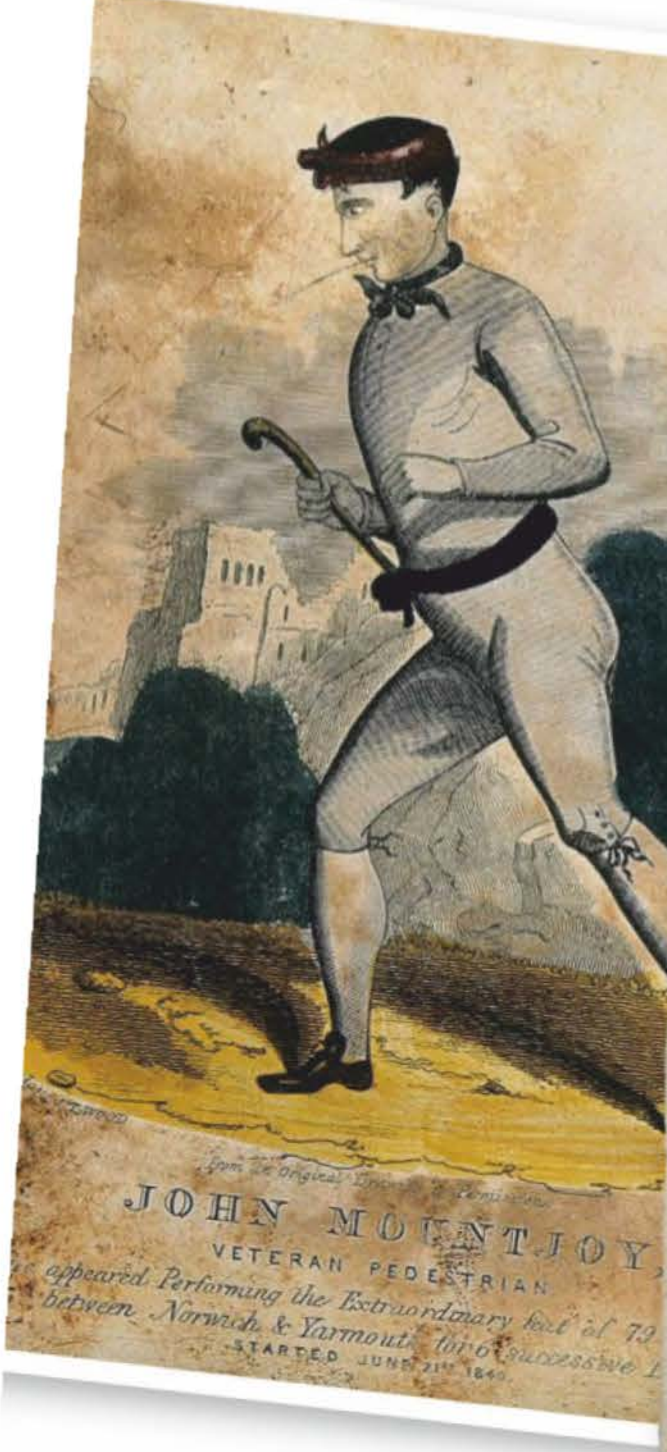


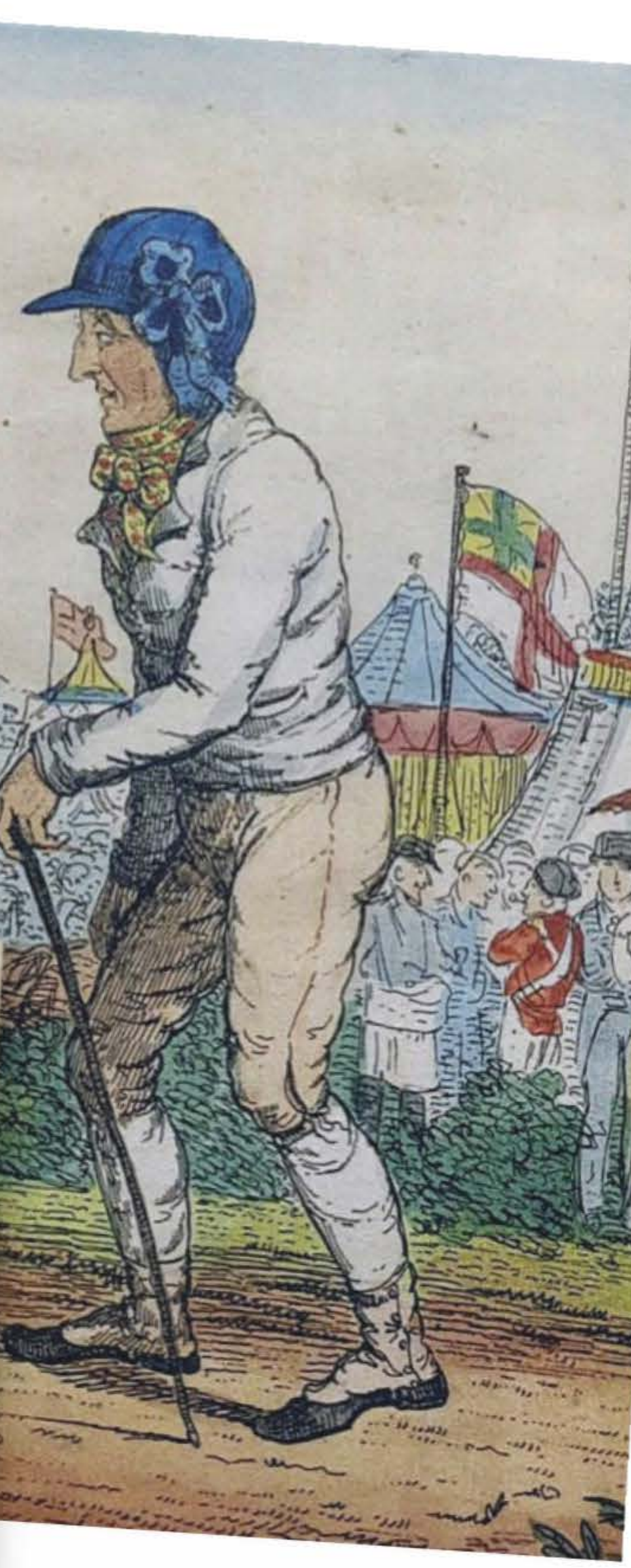
Captain Barclay became known as 'The Celebrated Pedestrian' for his long-distance feats on his feet

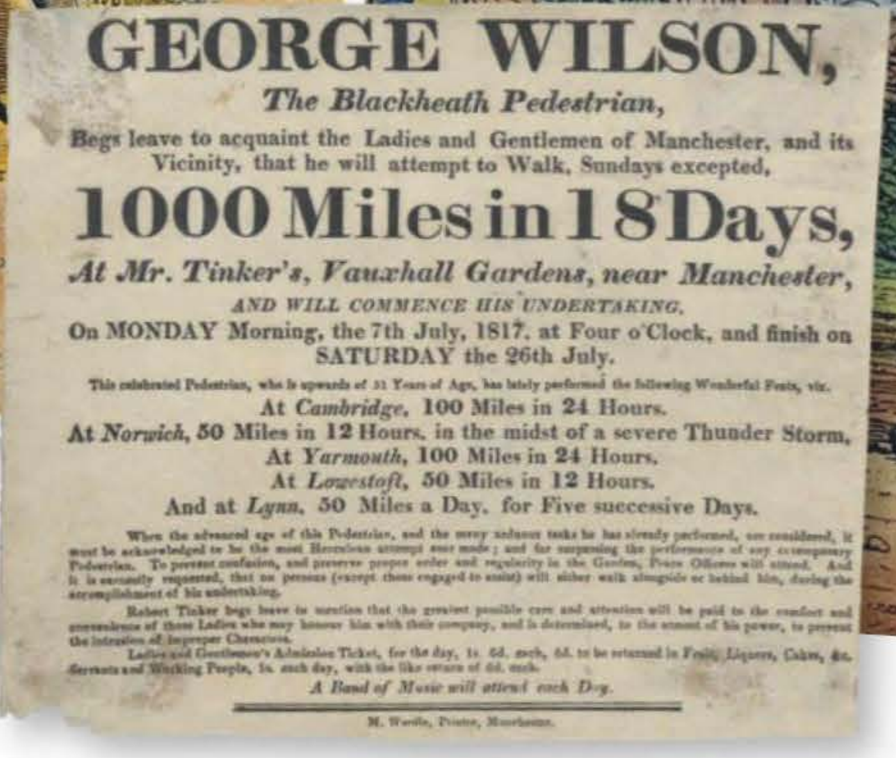


Foster Powell was a forerunner – or fore-walker – of pedestrianism; he first competed in 1764, walking 50 miles in seven hours

ALAMY X1, GETTY IMAGES X1, CHETHAM'S LIBRARY/MANCHESTER X1, WELLCOME COLLECTION X1


from the original … by permission
JOHN MOUNTJOY,
VETERAN PEDESTRIAN
appeared Performing the Extraordinary feat of 79
between Norwich & Yarmouth for 6 successive
STARTED JUNE 21st 1840





GEORGE WILSON,

The Blackheath Pedestrian,

Begs leave to acquaint the Ladies and Gentlemen of Manchester, and its Vicinity, that he will attempt to Walk, Sundays excepted,

1000 Miles in 18 Days,

At Mr. Tinker's, Vauxhall Gardens, near Manchester,

AND WILL COMMENCE HIS UNDERTAKING,

On MONDAY Morning, the 7th July, 1817, at Four o'Clock, and finish on SATURDAY the 26th July.

This celebrated Pedestrian, who is upwards of 51 Years of Age, has lately performed the following Wonderful Feats, viz.

At *Cambridge*, 100 Miles in 24 Hours.
At *Norwich*, 50 Miles in 12 Hours, in the midst of a severe Thunder Storm,
At *Yarmouth*, 100 Miles in 24 Hours,
At *Lowestoft*, 50 Miles in 12 Hours.
And at *Lynn*, 50 Miles a Day, for Five successive Days.

A Band of Music will attend each Day.

ABOVE: **Advertisement for Wilson's attempt to best Captain Barclay**

ABOVE LEFT: **Many took up the sport; John Mountjoy walked 79 miles across Norfolk in six days, says this engraving**

ABOVE RIGHT: **The huge crowd meant George Wilson never finished his 1,000-mile walk – he was arrested for disturbing the peace**

had been racing on foot since antiquity, after all. In Britain, both walking and running races had long been a staple of rural fairs, festivals and holy-day revels. And from the late-17th century, contests between 'running footmen' – a speedy breed of servant hired to run ahead of an employer's carriage – had provided amusement for aristocrats. Endurance events of the kind favoured by Barclay really captured the public imagination in the 18th century, turning distance walking into a mainstream spectator sport, and the competing pedestrians into star athletes of the day.

The sport's popularity can, in part, be attributed to a growing scientific curiosity about the capabilities and limitations of the human body – an interest satisfied by this form of foot racing. Mostly, though, pedestrianism owed its rise to the Georgians' insatiable appetite for gambling. As with prize-fighting and horse-racing, a pedestrian endeavour was ideal for betting and wagering on the outcome, and it was this that fuelled its popularity with sports fans.

Before Barclay claimed the crown, attorney's clerk Foster Powell had been the nation's most celebrated pedestrian. In 1773, he made front-page news when, for a wager of 100 guineas, he walked 404 miles from London to York and back comfortably within six days in fact, arriving six hours early. He was greeted on his return to the capital by 3,000 people, all seeking a glimpse of the man who could cover distances as fast as any horse, and with no obvious signs of fatigue. It was a route Powell would tread another three times, shaving off another three hours in the process.

Where Powell led, huge numbers followed. Newspapers were littered with accounts of pedestrian exploits, while copy-cat challenges filled the betting books of gentlemen's clubs. Age was no barrier: in 1789, a Donald MacLeod walked 1,680 miles from Inverness to London and back, and then back to London again, reputedly at the age of 100. Nor was sex a hurdle: Irishwoman Mary McMullen toured around England, routinely performing her favourite 92-mile distance in 24 hours, well into her sixties.

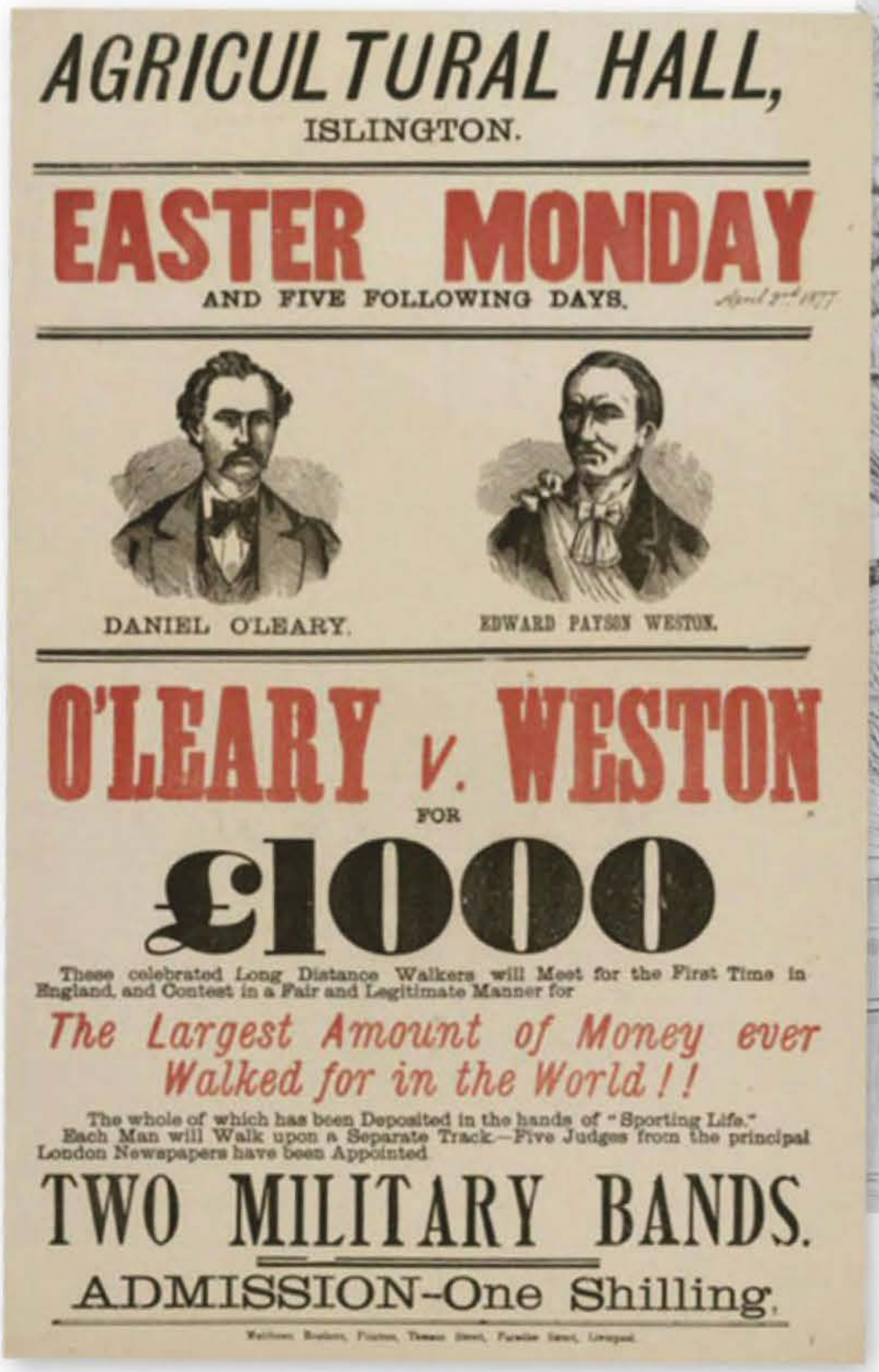
What's more, the umbrella term 'pedestrianism' didn't preclude racing another person instead of the clock; nor did it exclude runners. In 1807, Abraham Wood, a celebrated distance runner from Lancashire, famed for covering 40 miles in less than five hours, took on Captain Barclay in a head-to-head to see who could go a greater distance in 24 hours. Barclay was gifted 20 miles on starting since he would be walking while Wood walked or ran as he pleased.

THE LONGER THE BETTER

The longer the distance, the more star power a pedestrian gained. And it was the drawn-out races that were the most risky ventures health-wise, as well as the most exciting for gamblers since the result was far less easy to predict. There was much hype when George Wilson attempted to top Barclay's 1,000 miles in 1815, aiming to cover the same distance, but in 20 days. *The Times* issued daily bulletins on his progress; and so crowded with onlookers was his course on London's Blackheath that attendants had to walk in front with whips to clear his path, and behind to stop people treading on his heels.

Even though Georgian audiences were well accustomed to people travelling on their own two feet out of necessity, they knew full well that such races

GEORGE WILLSON ILLUSTRATION COURTESY OF THE BLACKHEATH SOCIETY



AGRICULTURAL HALL,
ISLINGTON.

EASTER MONDAY
AND FIVE FOLLOWING DAYS.

April 2nd 1877

DANIEL O'LEARY.

EDWARD PAYSON WESTON.

O'LEARY v. WESTON
FOR
£1000

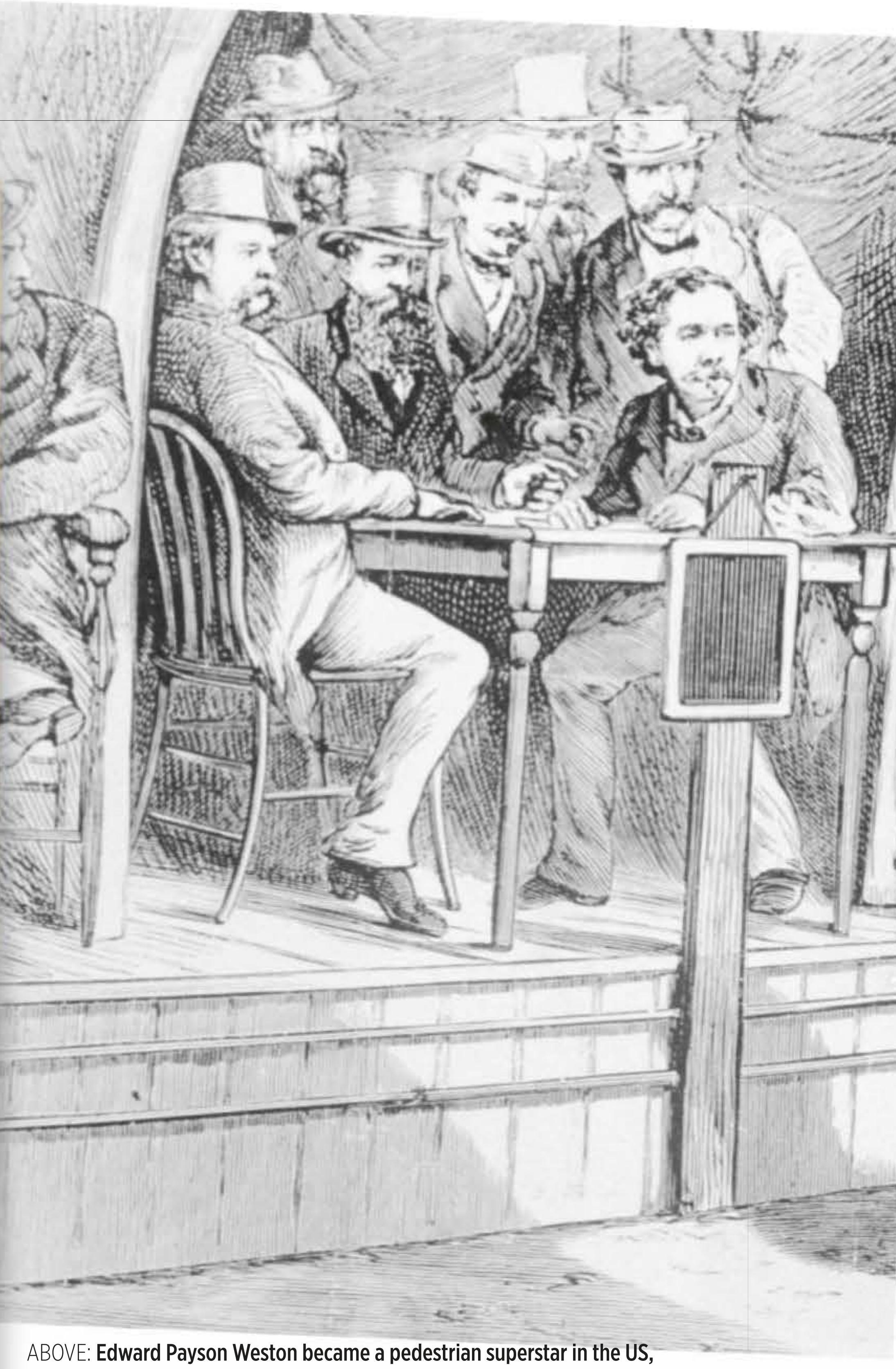
These celebrated Long Distance Walkers will Meet for the First Time in England, and Contest in a Fair and Legitimate Manner for

The Largest Amount of Money ever Walked for in the World!!

The whole of which has been Deposited in the hands of "Sporting Life." Each Man will Walk upon a Separate Track.—Five Judges from the principal London Newspapers have been Appointed.

TWO MILITARY BANDS.

ADMISSION-One Shilling.



ABOVE: **Edward Payson Weston became a pedestrian superstar in the US, first embarking on a more than 400-mile walk after losing a bet**

LEFT: **An 1877 poster for Weston's second race against Daniel O'Leary, who had beaten him two years earlier. Weston lost again**

> **"Many pedestrians admitted occasionally performing poorly so as to encourage future bets being made against them"**

GETTY IMAGES X2, WELLCOME COLLECTION X1, COURTESY OF PAUL MARSHALL X1

drew a fine line between exertion and exhaustion. Pedestrian feats were physically and mentally gruelling, particularly in an age without the luxuries of cushioned trainers, blister plasters or energy drinks. Though Captain Barclay walked back and forth on a carefully levelled half mile course, he had few remedies for the aches, pains and crippling fatigue. His only aides were a pair of thick soled shoes to avoid unnecessary pressure on the feet; a pair of soft, lambs wool stockings; and a needle with which his attendants could poke him in order to keep him awake.

And, unless he carried a lantern, Foster Powell probably had to walk much of his London to York route in the dark: since it was early December, there were no street lamps, and he rested for only five hours each night.

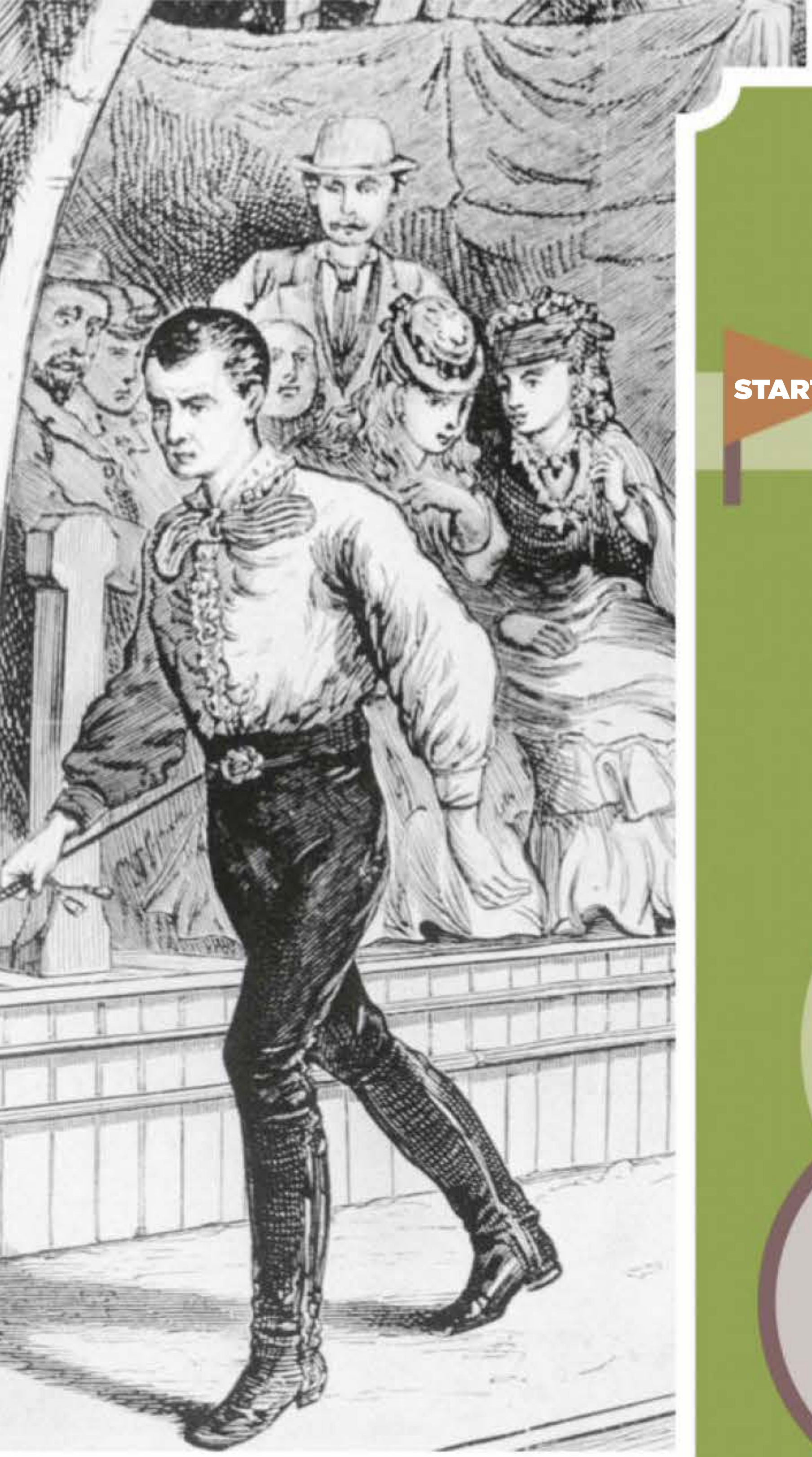
Stamina was crucial to maintain an appropriately brisk pace for a prolonged period of time. If records are to be believed, many walkers kept up a steady six miles an hour for a considerable part of their distance, and runners often travelled more than eight miles an hour over 20 miles. Training was vigorous, though also comprised a detox, enforced 'sweats', and a meat-only diet.

However, the Georgian career-pedestrian was less concerned with speed, personal bests and record breaking, than ensuring the wager was won. There was no desire to hit a target too easily or the next would have to be considerably more difficult – indeed, many admitted occasionally performing poorly so as to encourage future bets being made against them.

In the end, it was pedestrianism's preoccupation with money and the inextricable link to gambling that would bring about the sport's downfall.

STADIUM EVENTS

Commercialisation proceeded at pace as the Victorian era dawned. The spread of industrialisation and increased traffic on the turnpike roads forced pedestrians to find new spaces, and entrepreneurial publicans spotted a lucrative opportunity. They began to enclose ground near their taverns and offered up specially constructed courses for foot races of all kinds, charging punters for admission and offering prize pots, or a cut of the door fees, to the competitors.



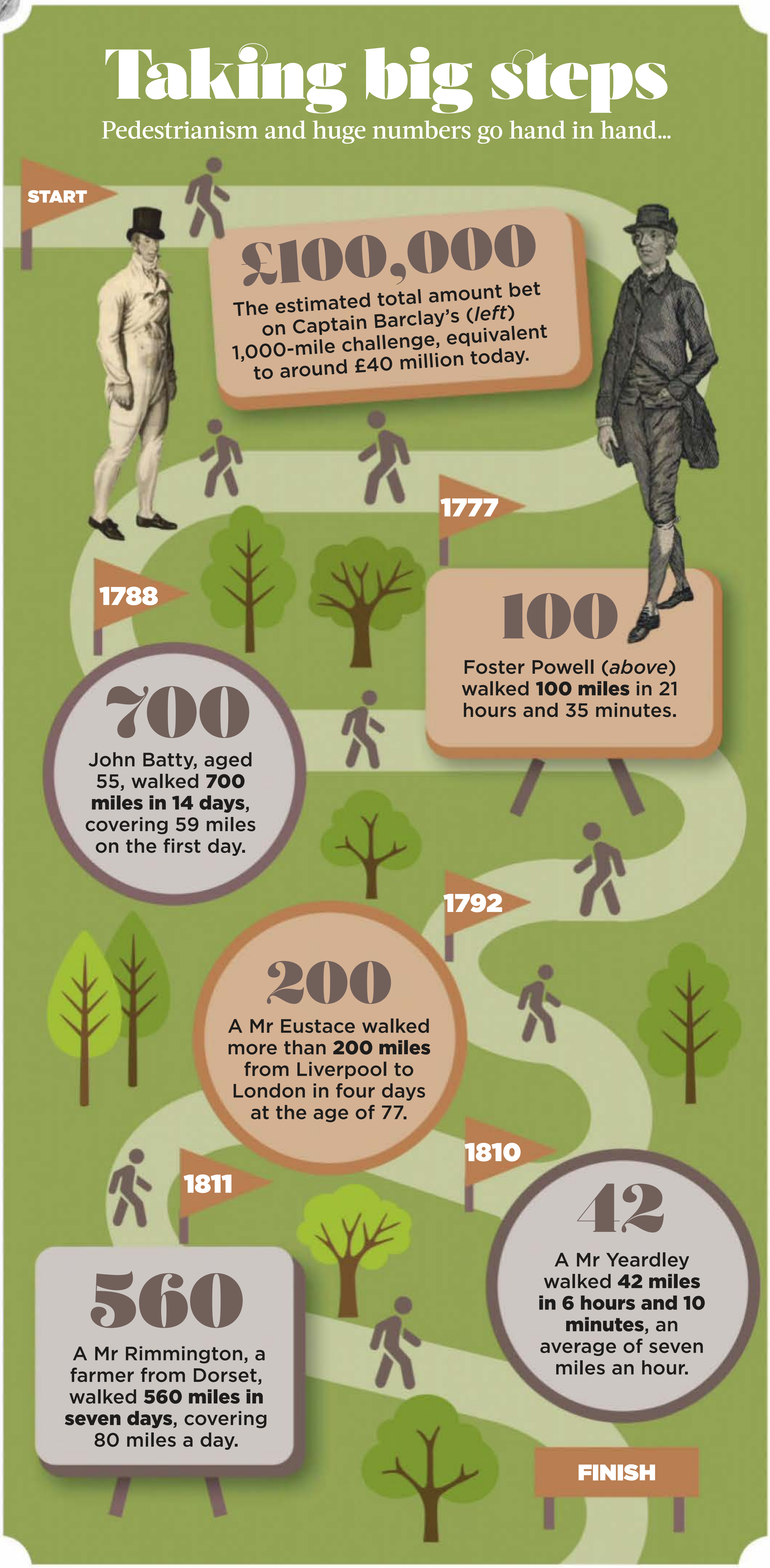
It proved a phenomenally successful business model. With football still in its infancy, pedestrianism enjoyed a boom period in Britain in the 1840s and 50s, especially popular with the working classes. Grounds like Hackney Wick in London and Copenhagen Grounds in Manchester could accommodate crowds of 10,000 or more, congregating to watch 'peds' participating in 'champion belt' or 'championship cup' competitions. Increasingly, races got shorter – four, six or 10 miles usually – since gambling was then equally fast paced.

The Victorians took the sport to the outposts of the empire and the US, where it particularly thrived. Stars like Edward Payson Weston sometimes ran the legs off their British counterparts. In 1867, Weston walked over 1,200 miles from Portland, Maine, to Chicago in 26 days. Especially popular on both sides of the Atlantic were six-day races, where contestants had from midnight on a Sunday through to midnight the following Saturday to cover as many miles as possible on a circular track.

Tens of thousands of people watched Weston take on fellow American Daniel O'Leary in a head-to-head race at the ▸

Taking big steps

Pedestrianism and huge numbers go hand in hand...



£100,000

The estimated total amount bet on Captain Barclay's (*left*) 1,000-mile challenge, equivalent to around £40 million today.

100

Foster Powell (*above*) walked **100 miles** in 21 hours and 35 minutes.

700

John Batty, aged 55, walked **700 miles in 14 days**, covering 59 miles on the first day.

200

A Mr Eustace walked more than **200 miles** from Liverpool to London in four days at the age of 77.

42

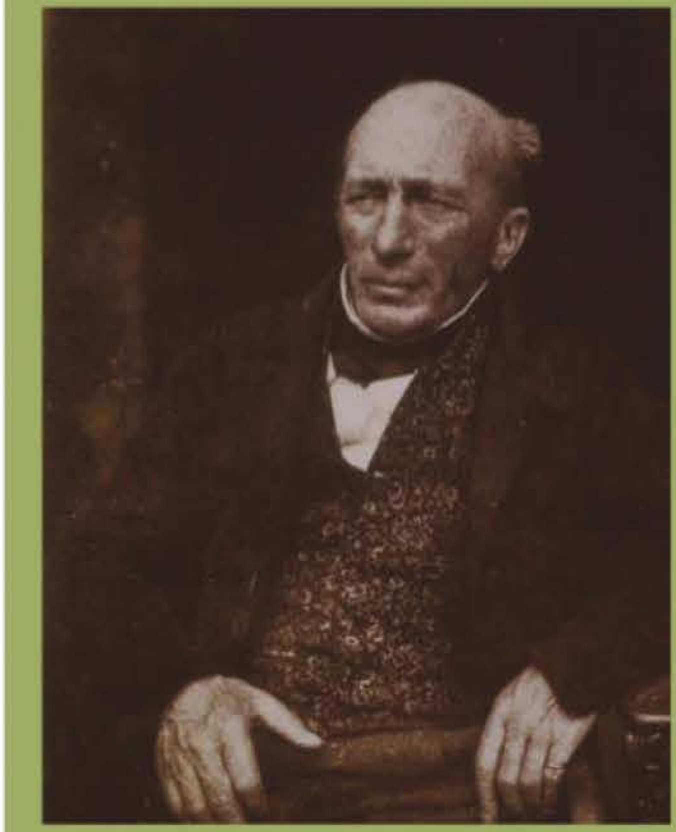
A Mr Yeardley walked **42 miles in 6 hours and 10 minutes**, an average of seven miles an hour.

560

A Mr Rimmington, a farmer from Dorset, walked **560 miles in seven days**, covering 80 miles a day.

Three walking wonders

In a plethora of pedestrians, these stars of the sport put their best foot forward



Captain Robert Barclay

▲ Unlike most in pedestrianism – a sport needing no money to undertake – Captain Barclay was a gentleman landowner, as well as a soldier in the British Army. A matter of days after completing his 1,000-mile walk, he left England to fight Napoleon's forces in the Walcheren Campaign. His training methods, outlined in 1813's *Pedestrianism*, set a blueprint for the next pedestrians.

Madame Ada Anderson

▶ A former actor, Ada Anderson became Britain's most celebrated female pedestrian. She famously outdid Captain Barclay several times in 1878, walking 1,008 miles in under 672 hours, and then 1,500 miles in 1,000 hours. Travelling to America to compete, Anderson inspired many women to follow in her footsteps.

Edward Payson Weston

▲ Weston kick-started his career in 1861 by walking over 400 miles from Boston to Washington, DC, for Abraham Lincoln's presidential inauguration. The 'father of six-day racing' later became an advocate for exercise, warning of the danger to health posed by automobiles. Ironically, a collision with a taxi in the 1920s left him unable to walk.

DID YOU KNOW?

IT'S NEIGH PROBLEM

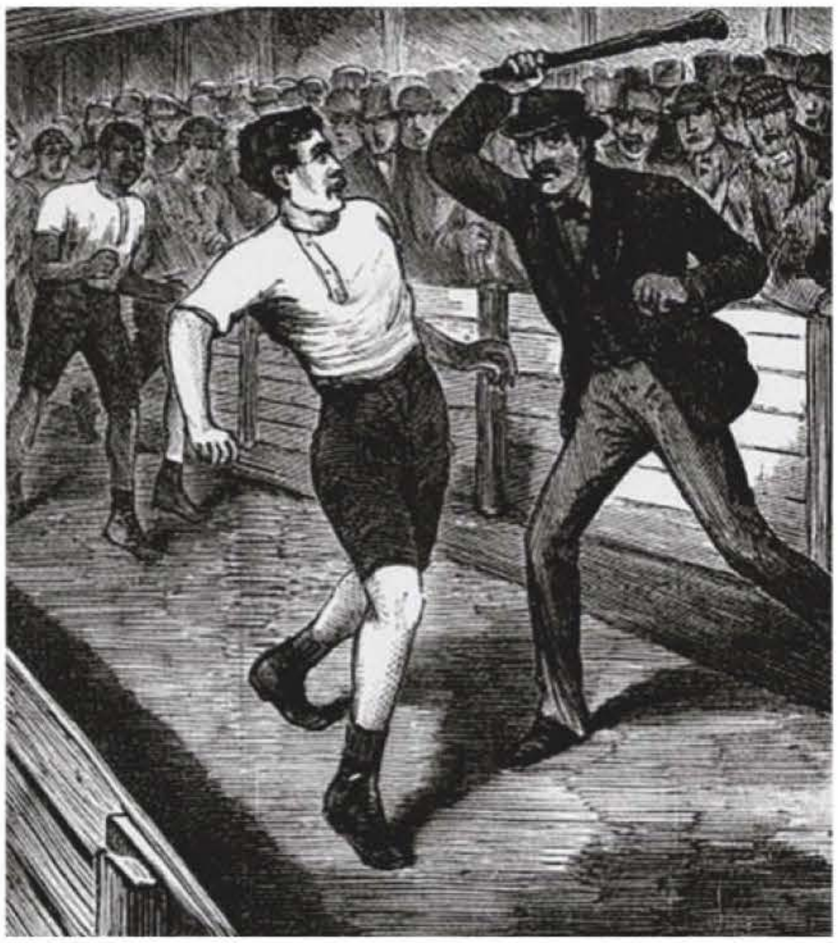
Anderson's first feat in the US was to walk 2,700 quarter-miles in 2,700 quarter-hours, completed at Mozart Garden, New York. As she was leaving afterwards, the cheering crowd pulled her carriage along themselves.

> "Having begun the 19th century on a triumphant high, pedestrianism limped towards a terminal decline"

◀ Agricultural Hall, London, in 1877, both covering more than 500 miles, though O'Leary came out the winner. The contest inspired the creation of the Astley Belt race, billed as the first official world pedestrian championship. But by the 1870s, the sport's reputation had been tarnished. The jumble of separately promoted events, all over different distances and with different rules, and the lack of central regulation alienated fans. The resulting champion titles and records had no legitimacy, not least as the sport had long been dogged by allegations of cheating, match fixing, impersonation and sabotage.

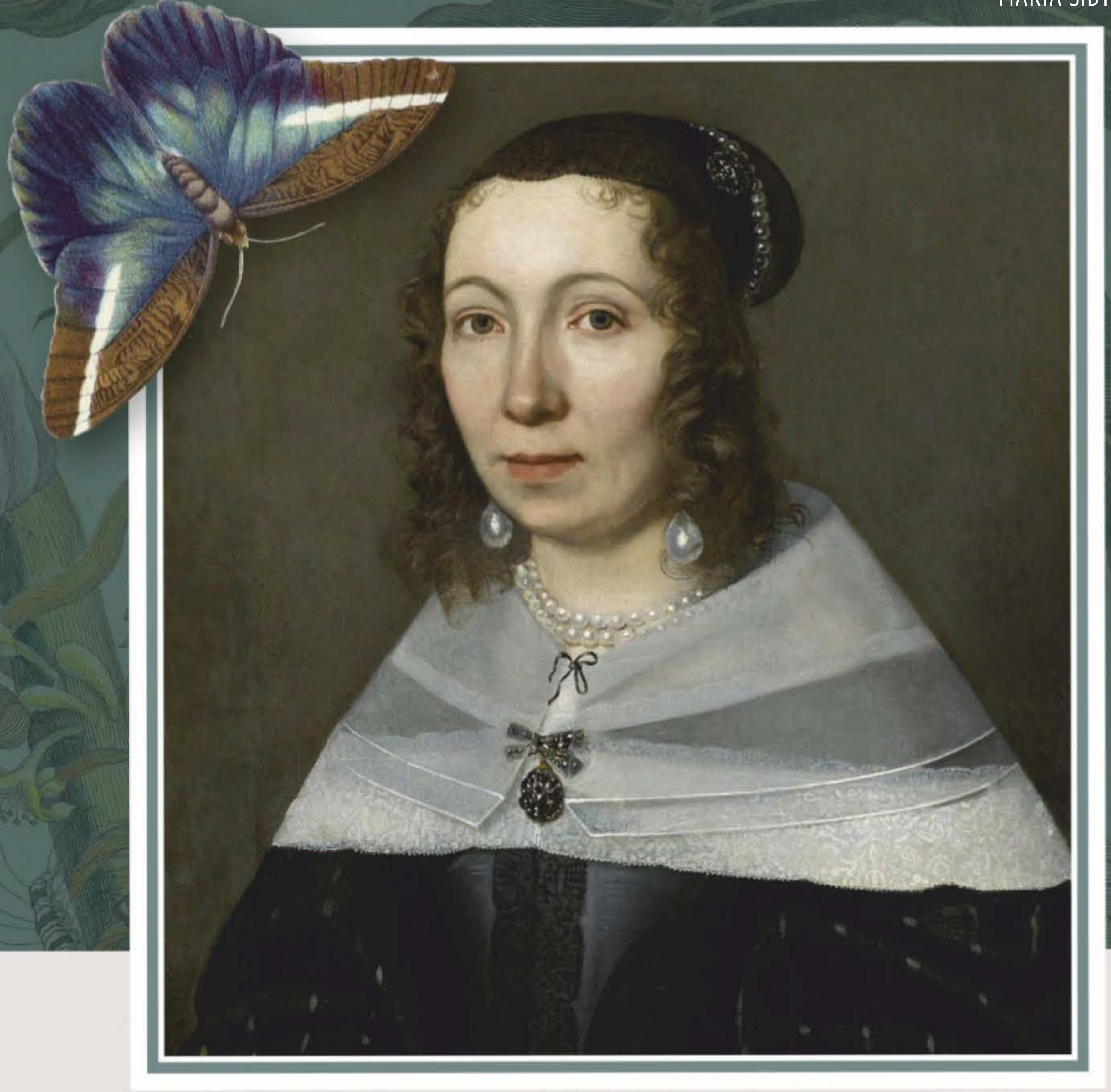
So having begun the 19th century on a triumphant high, with Captain Barclay achieving what no man had done on two feet before, pedestrianism limped towards the end in terminal decline. It was eventually marginalised by the amateur athletics movement, with its strict rules, central governing body, and an ideology that prioritised personal achievement over profit.

The great pedestrians of the past century had been tainted by over commercialisation, their feats overlooked and undervalued. But it was they who got us hooked on foot racing in the first place and who set the pace for athletes in decades to come. ⊙



'Peds' were vulnerable to attack from gamblers looking for a certain result

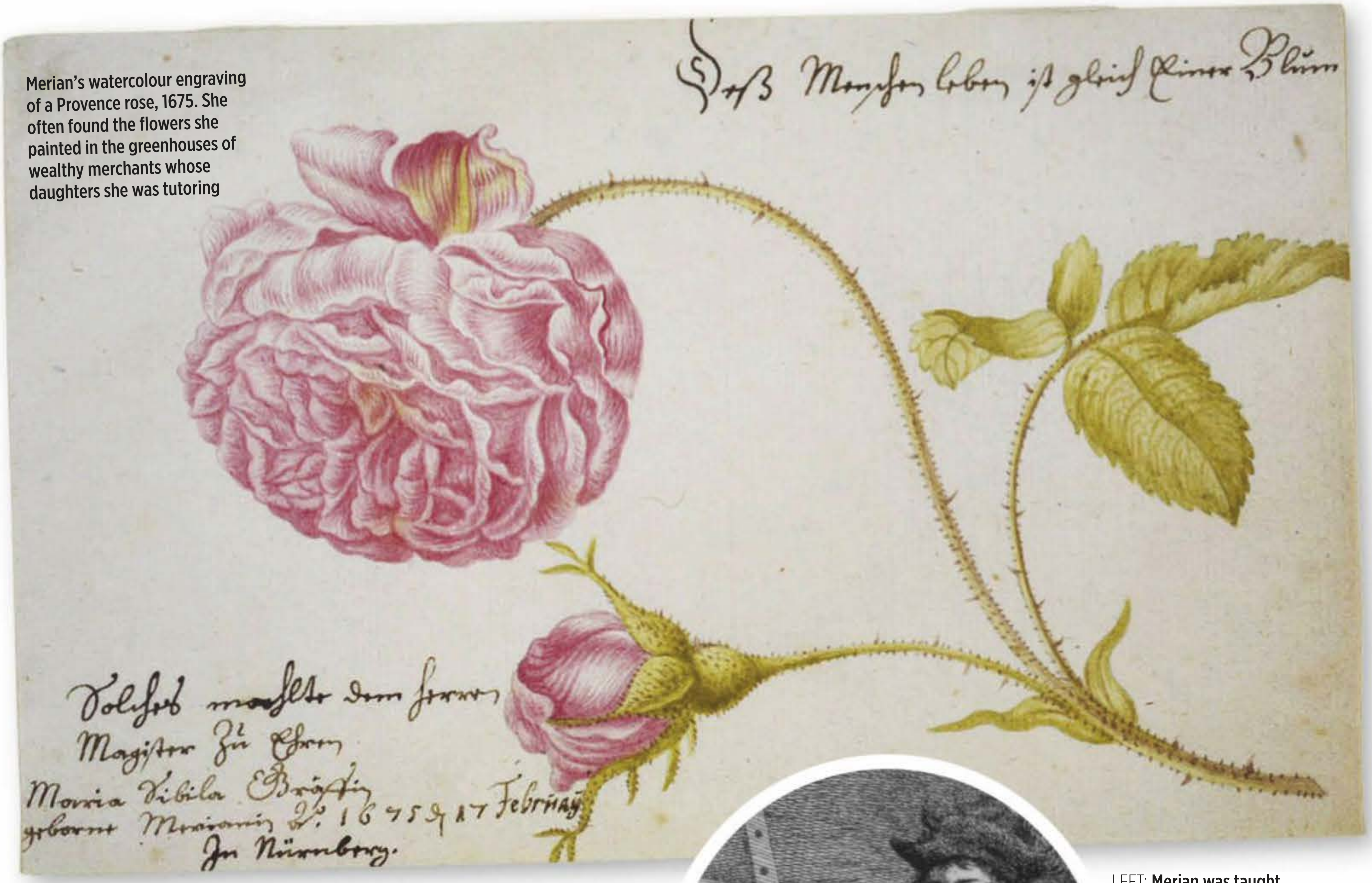
ALAMY X1, GETTY IMAGES X1, COURTESY OF PAUL MARSHALL X1, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS X1



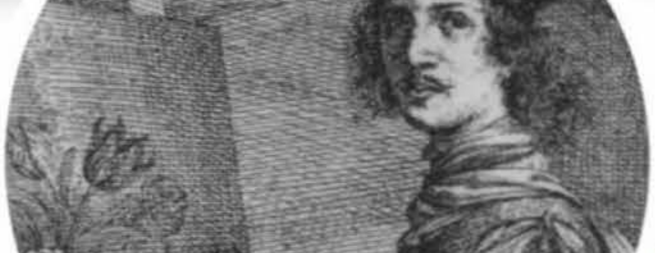
THE WOMAN WHO CHALLENGED THE NATURAL WORLD

Maria Sibylla Merian revealed the secrets of the insect world through a blend of exquisite art and scientific observation – the result, writes **Ellie Cawthorne**, of an unwavering passion for the wonders of nature

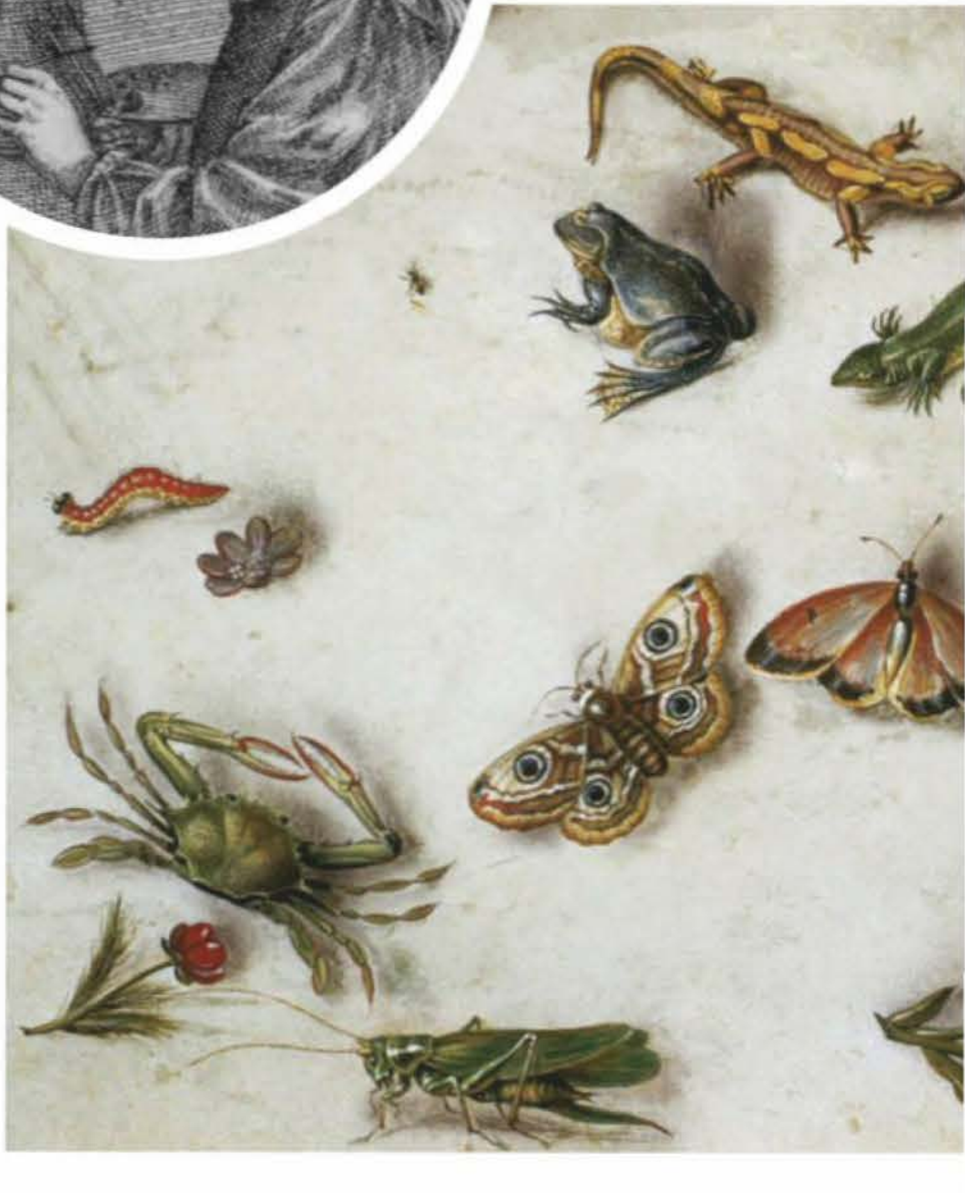
ALAMY X3, GETTY IMAGES X1


Deß Menschen leben ist gleich einer Blum
Solches machte dem Herrn
Magister zu Ehren
Maria Sibila Gräffin
geborne Meriani A°. 1675 d 17 Februar
In Nürnberg.

Merian's watercolour engraving of a Provence rose, 1675. She often found the flowers she painted in the greenhouses of wealthy merchants whose daughters she was tutoring



LEFT: **Merian was taught to paint by her stepfather, still-life painter Jacob Marrel**



BELOW: **Like his protégé, Marrel was accomplished at painting flora and fauna**

Somewhere in the bustling streets of 17th century Frankfurt, a teenage girl was keeping watch over her collection of caterpillars, making detailed notes and sketches as they shed their skins "just as a person pulls off a shirt over his head". This batch of silkworms was the latest of many that she had reared in small paper houses, in a slow process of trial and error. But nursing them to maturity was no easy task. "You must take great pains to care for them," noted the girl. "If a storm comes, you must cover them; otherwise they will get jaundice and dropsy. They will also die when you give them too much to eat."

The curiosity, diligence and determination shown by Maria Sibylla Merian in raising these caterpillars into pearly white moths would grow as the years passed into something new, much like those tiny subjects of her fascination. The girl who kept a caterpillar collection would become a pioneering naturalist, who travelled to unexplored lands in search of natural wonders, and reimagine the ways that insects and plants could be illustrated.

ART IN THE FAMILY

Born in 1647, Merian was inducted into the art world from a young age. Her father Matthäus ran a respected Frankfurt printing house, then after his death, her mother married the still life painter and art dealer Jacob Marrel. Although her gender meant that she couldn't become an official apprentice, Merian picked up painting techniques from her encouraging stepfather, and learnt engraving from her elder half brothers.

Early on Merian combined her two passions for art and nature, collecting insects for her stepfather to paint and drawing flowers "decorated with caterpillars and summer birds [butterflies]… like the landscape painters do". Her medium was watercolours, seen as a suitably feminine artistic pursuit at the time.

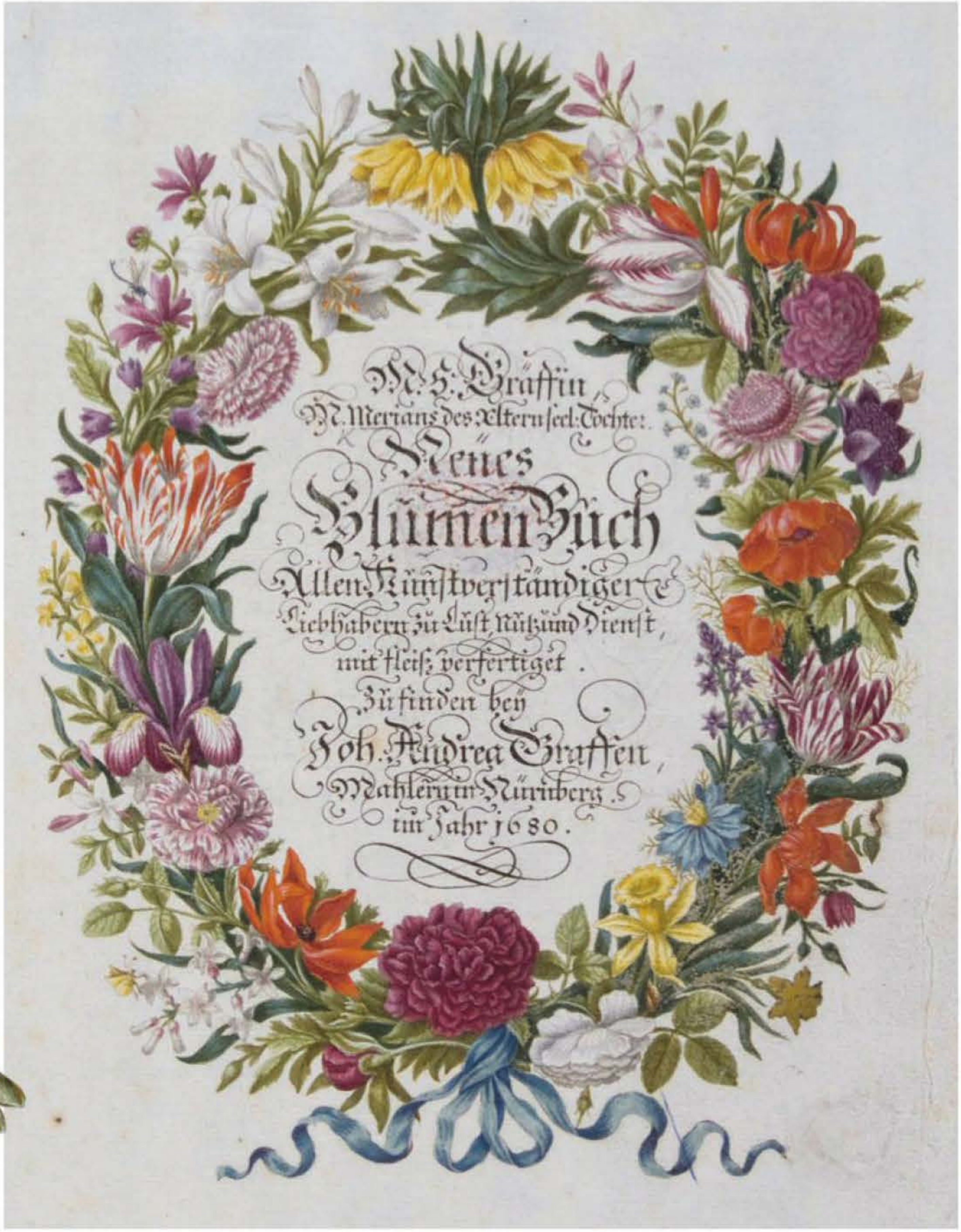
"The girl who kept caterpillars would become a pioneering naturalist who travelled to unexplored lands"

ALAMY X3, GETTY IMAGES X2

Aged 18, Merian married Johann Andreas Graff, an apprentice of her stepfather. Whether she married out of love, obligation or in search of further freedoms, she clearly intended to continue working despite her change in marital status. In 1668, the couple – now with a young daughter in tow – moved to Nuremberg. Here, Merian took on a number of female art students and created decorative prints of marigolds, irises and hyacinths for them to copy. These delicate designs proved so popular that she compiled them in what would become her first publication: *Blumenbuch*.

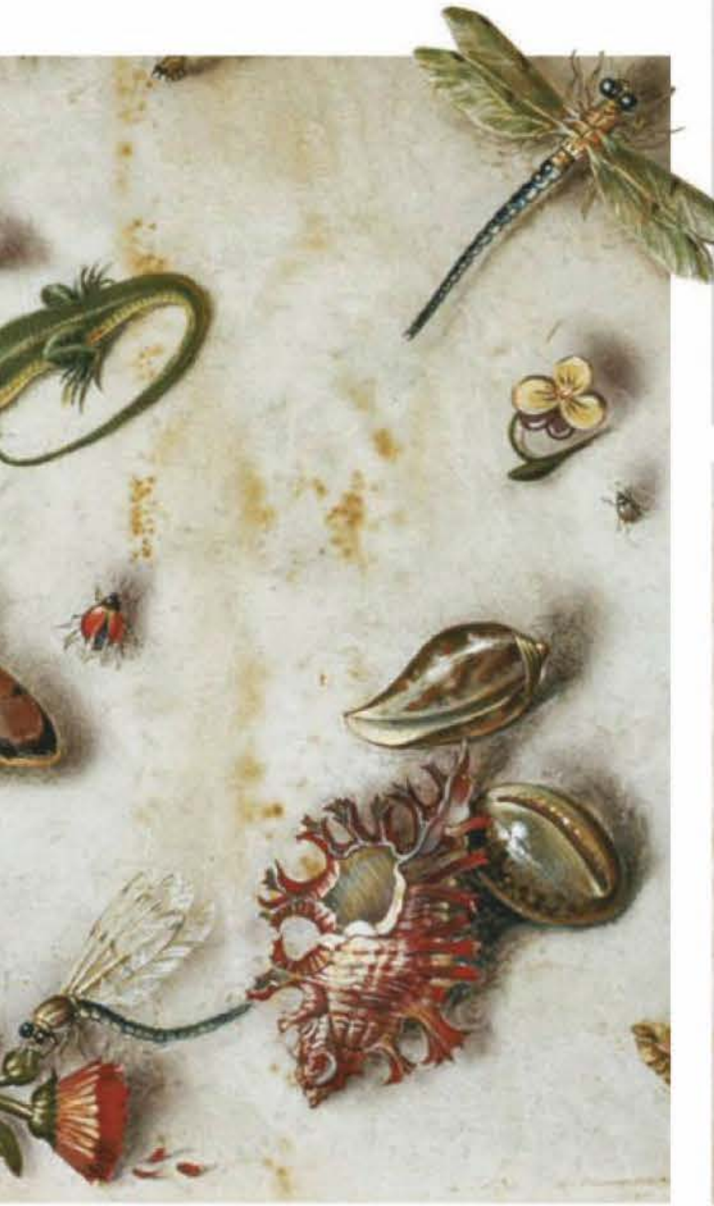
Sold in bundles, Merian's flower prints were a financial success, and her reputation as a nature painter grew. In 1675, a survey of German artists by art historian Joachim von Sandrart noted that she was known for "all kinds of decorations composed of flowers, fruit and birds, in particular also the excrement of worms, flies, gnats, spiders… works like these seemed to emerge from her hands daily".

Her floral prints were profitable, but Merian had her sights set on a more scientifically ambitious project. In 1679, a year after the birth of her second daughter, she published *Caterpillars, Their Wondrous Metamorphosis and Peculiar Nourishment from Flowers*. Intended to benefit "explorers of nature, art painters and lovers of gardens", this volume represented a novel way of illustrating nature, showing Merian's beloved ▶

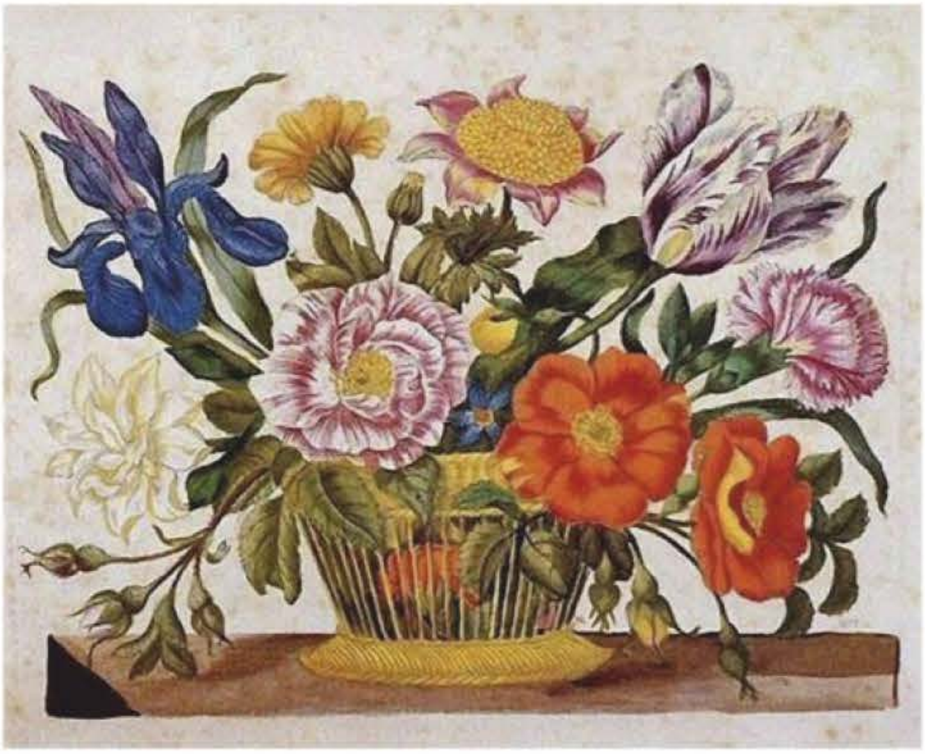


M. S. Gräffin,
M. Merians des Eltern ſeel: Tochter.
Neues
Blumen Buch
Allen Kunſtverſtändiger
Liebhabern zu Luſt, Nutz und Dienſt,
mit fleiſs verfertiget.
Zu finden bey
Joh. Andrea Graffen,
Mahlern in Nürnberg.
im Jahr 1680.

ABOVE: **After three successful volumes of *Blumenbuch*, Merian had them republished together in her 'New Book of Flowers' – *Neues Blumenbuch***



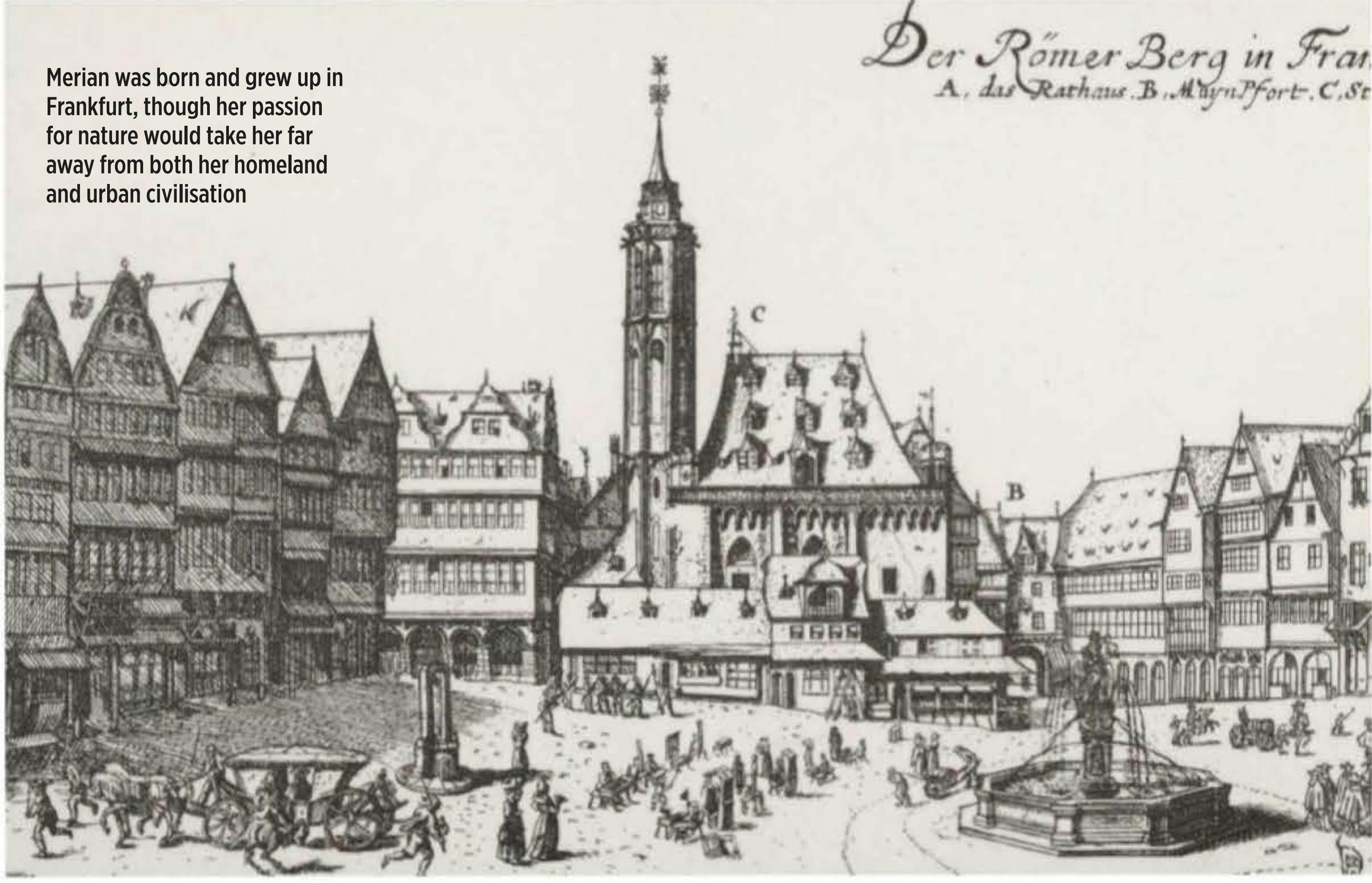
LEFT: **Her floral prints were more than just profitable; they established Merian as an artist of considerable talent**



insects as just one part of a rich, interconnected ecosystem.

Bordered with silkworms perched on mulberry branches, the frontispiece proudly declared how the behaviours and development of "caterpillars, worms, summer birds, moths, flies and other such creatures" inside were "diligently studied, briefly described from nature, painted, engraved in copper and published by Maria Sibylla Graff herself."

But while Merian's artistic career was going from strength to strength, her marriage had begun to founder. By 1685, Graff had left his wife and daughters with Merian's mother in Frankfurt and travelled back to Nuremberg alone. The separation would prove permanent. For Merian that meant forgoing the security that had come with marriage and embracing a different kind of life entirely.

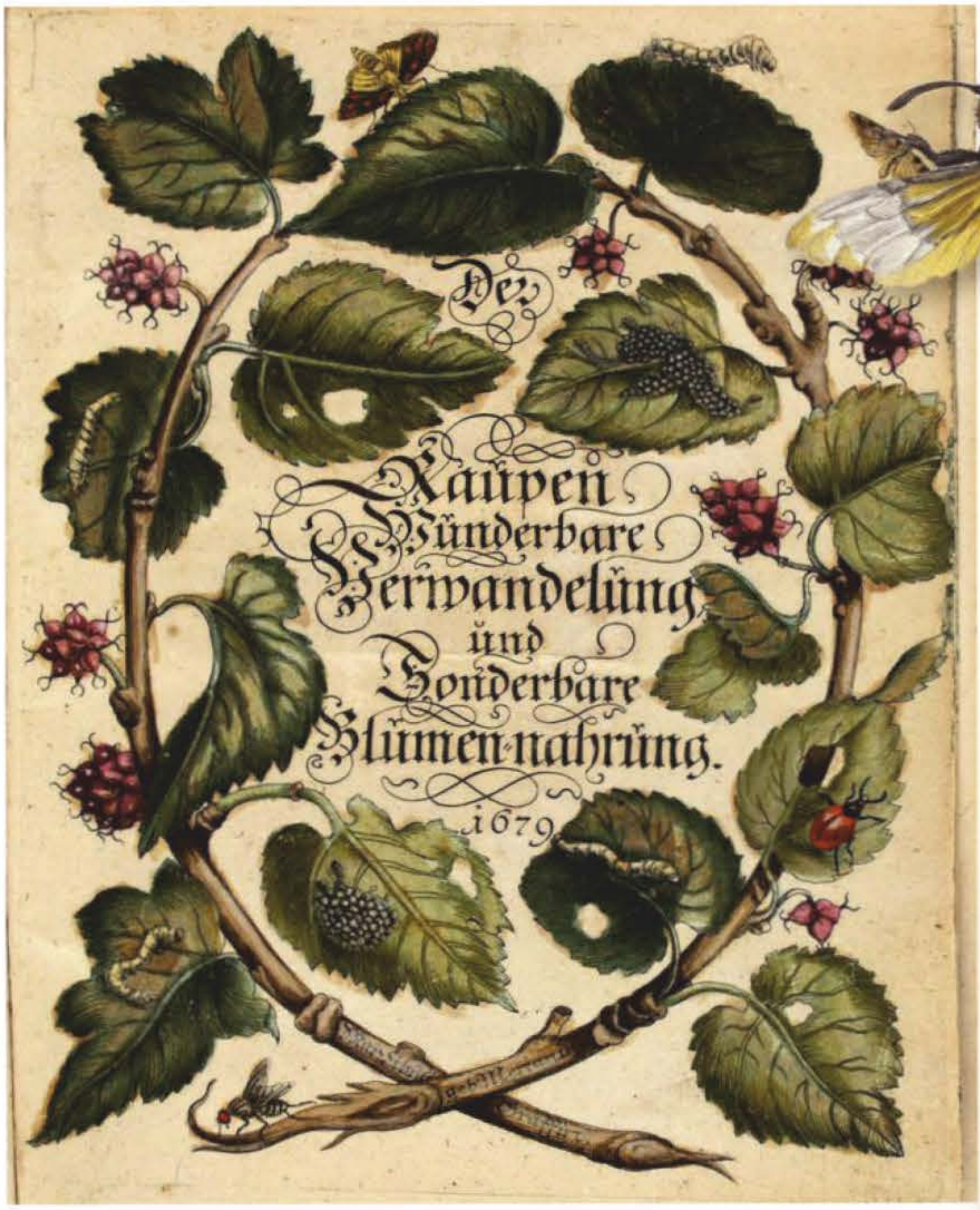

Der Römer Berg in Fran
A. das Rathaus. B. Mayn Pfort. C. St
C
B

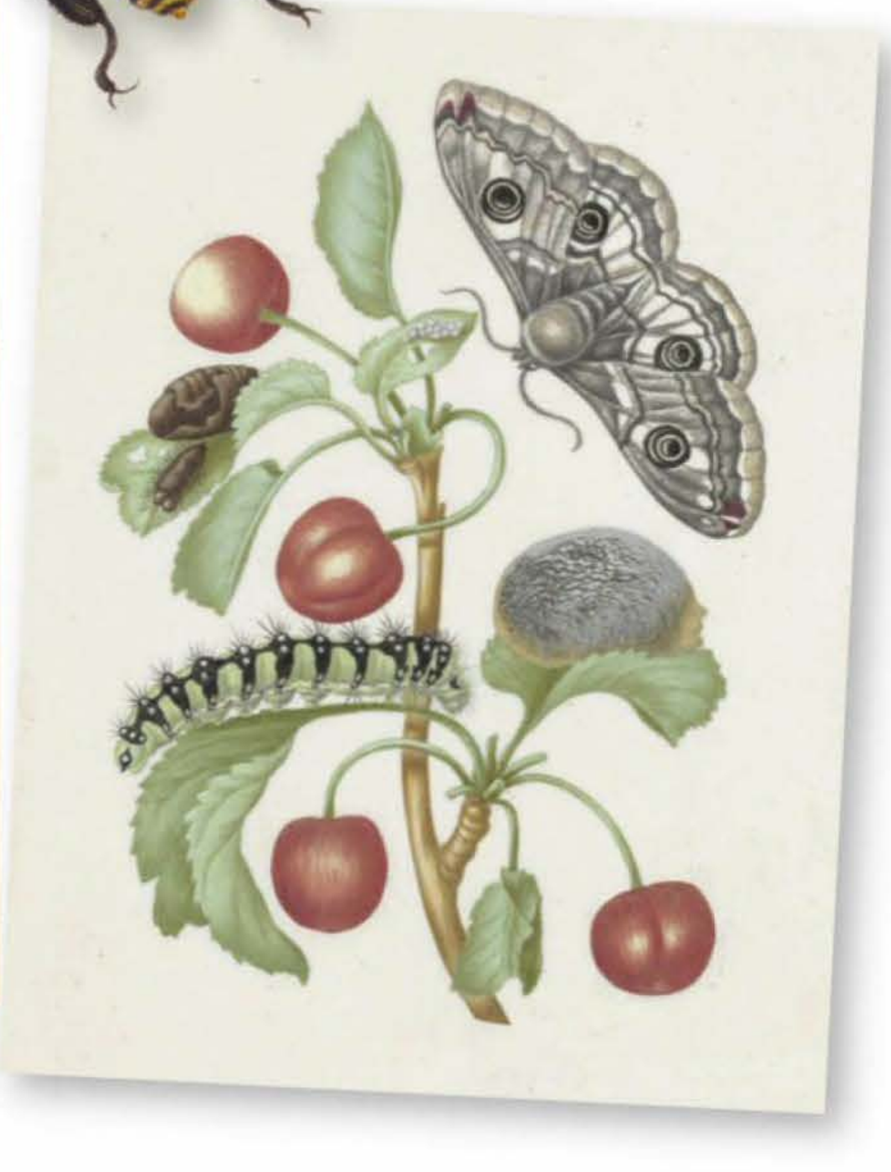
Merian was born and grew up in Frankfurt, though her passion for nature would take her far away from both her homeland and urban civilisation

SEEKING SOLITUDE

In 1685, the Merian women travelled north to the isolated Waltha Castle in the Netherlands. This was home to her half brother Caspar and the Labadists, the religious sect he belonged to. It was an austere existence, with members expected to renounce all luxury for a life of communal work and religious devotion. Nevertheless, Merian made the most of the absence of distractions to continue her investigations. She copied out two decades' worth of notebooks, documented parasites and dissected frogs. In her mind, scientific enquiry was not at odds with religious devotion. Instead, she was "full of praise at God's mysterious power and the wonderful attention he pays to such insignificant little creatures," and saw recording their beauty as a way to honour him, "glorifying him as the creator of even the smallest and humblest of these worms".

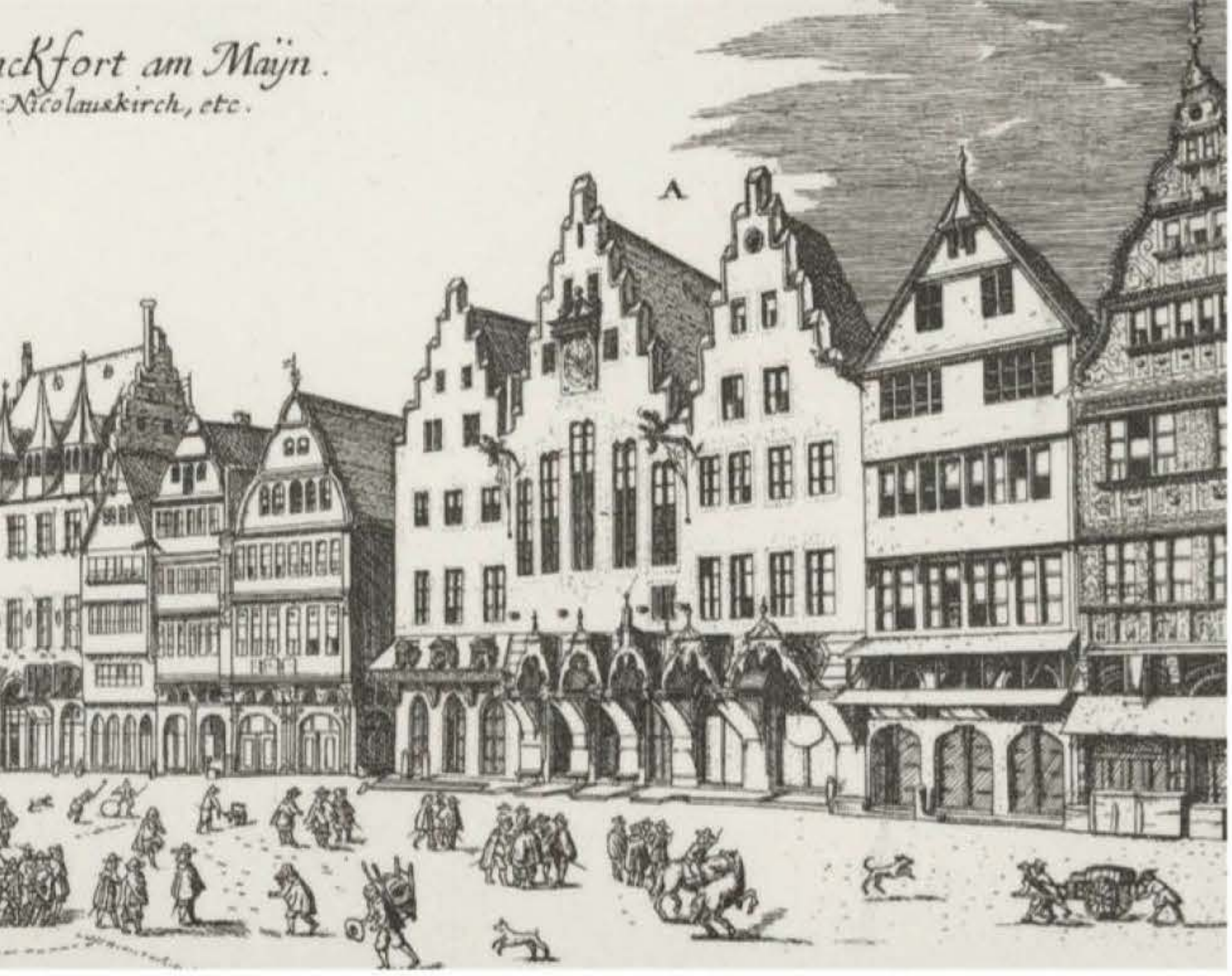
The restrained yet peaceful life Merian enjoyed there came under threat when her estranged husband suddenly appeared at the castle gates. She was able to reject Graff's pleas for a reunion – thanks to the Labadists who declared their marriage void – and this





Merian's first work dedicated to her beloved caterpillars (*above*) was published in 1679, replete with exhaustive illustrations including this one (*right*) on the transformation of the peacock butterfly

ALAMY X1, AKG-IMAGES X1, BRIDGEMAN IMAGES X1, GETTY IMAGES X1, SCIENCE PHOTO LIBRARY X1


ckfort am Mayn.
Nicolausskirch, etc.
A

> “Amsterdam seemed the ideal base for a curious mind such as hers, a hub for art, science and commerce”

may well have been the last time the pair ever saw one another.

Over the years that followed, the Labadist way of life began to fall apart, as the community became plagued by infighting and disease. In 1691, Merian decided to leave her life of quiet contemplation behind. She chose a new home that could hardly have been more different: Amsterdam.

SOMETHING SWEETER

The bustling city seemed an ideal base for a curious mind such as hers, and Merian soon found herself at the heart of a global hub for art, science and commerce. Thinkers debated the latest ideas in coffee shops, while merchants bartered over exotic goods shipped from all over the world. The city had more relaxed laws surrounding women’s work, and Merian was able to court wealthy patrons; in an effort to shake off her past, she began signing letters with her maiden name.

Yet, despite all the city had to offer, Merian struggled to settle. Even the dazzling specimens and natural oddities of the city’s plentiful curiosity cabinets left her cold, the “countless insects” rigidly displayed “in a manner that lacked both their place of origin and how they reproduced”. For Merian, who was so used to documenting animals in their natural habitat, Amsterdam’s urban environment felt stilted. It “lacked the opportunity to search specifically for that which is found in the fens and heath”, and her mind turned to more exotic adventures. Finally, she took the plunge, putting 255 of her paintings up for sale to fund a daring voyage half way across the world.

In 1699, the 52 year old Merian boarded a ship bound for Suriname, a Dutch colony on the coast of South America. With her she took a collection of dark headed caterpillars and her younger daughter, Dorothea. Merian had most likely heard about Suriname from her time in Amsterdam, and the Labadists, who had established an outpost there. Members of the religious community returned armed with dazzling specimens and tales of natural wonders. However, they also told of danger and hardship, such as blistering thunderstorms, crippling temperatures, leprosy and even pirates.

Governed by the Dutch since 1667, Suriname was dominated by sugar plantations powered by slave labour. Merian complained that Europeans there “mocked me for seeking anything other than sugar”. But for her, the country’s real riches lay elsewhere.

The natural wonders she found along with Dorothea were bountiful, from vanilla orchids and pineapples to scarlet ibis and tarantulas large enough to eat hummingbirds. The pair set up home in the small settlement of Paramaribo, where, unfamiliar with the climate and customs, they relied on the help of local Amerindian women. As well as providing domestic help, these women were knowledgeable guides to the forest, bringing Merian lantern flies and guavas and showing her which plants were medicinal and which poisonous.

After studying life in their garden and on plantations, the women embarked on long insect hunting expeditions into the rainforest. In spring 1700, they left the security of town and travelled several days upriver, past basking caiman and ▶

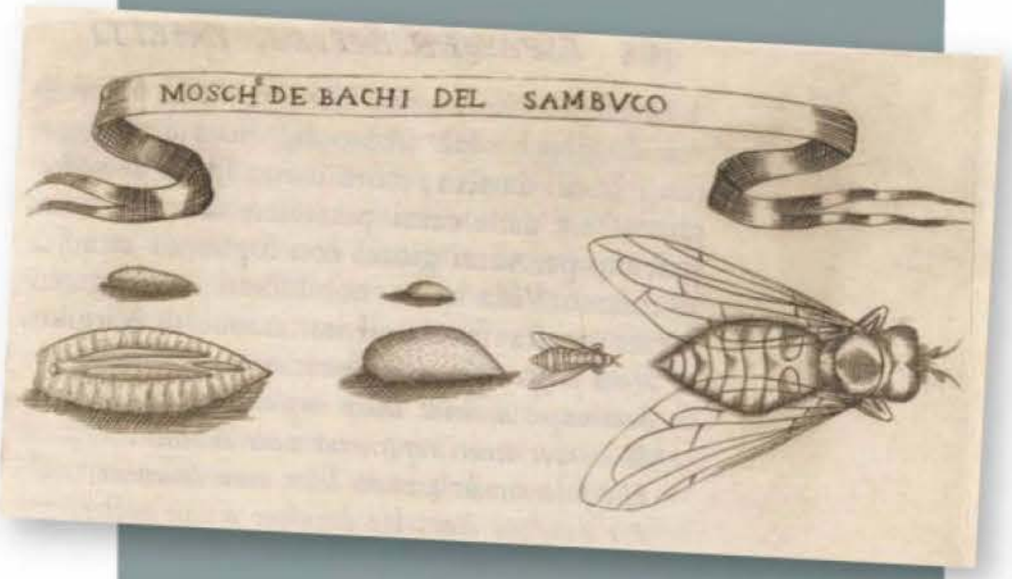
SOMETHING FROM NOTHING

Merian’s drawings helped dispel the idea that animals ‘popped into being’

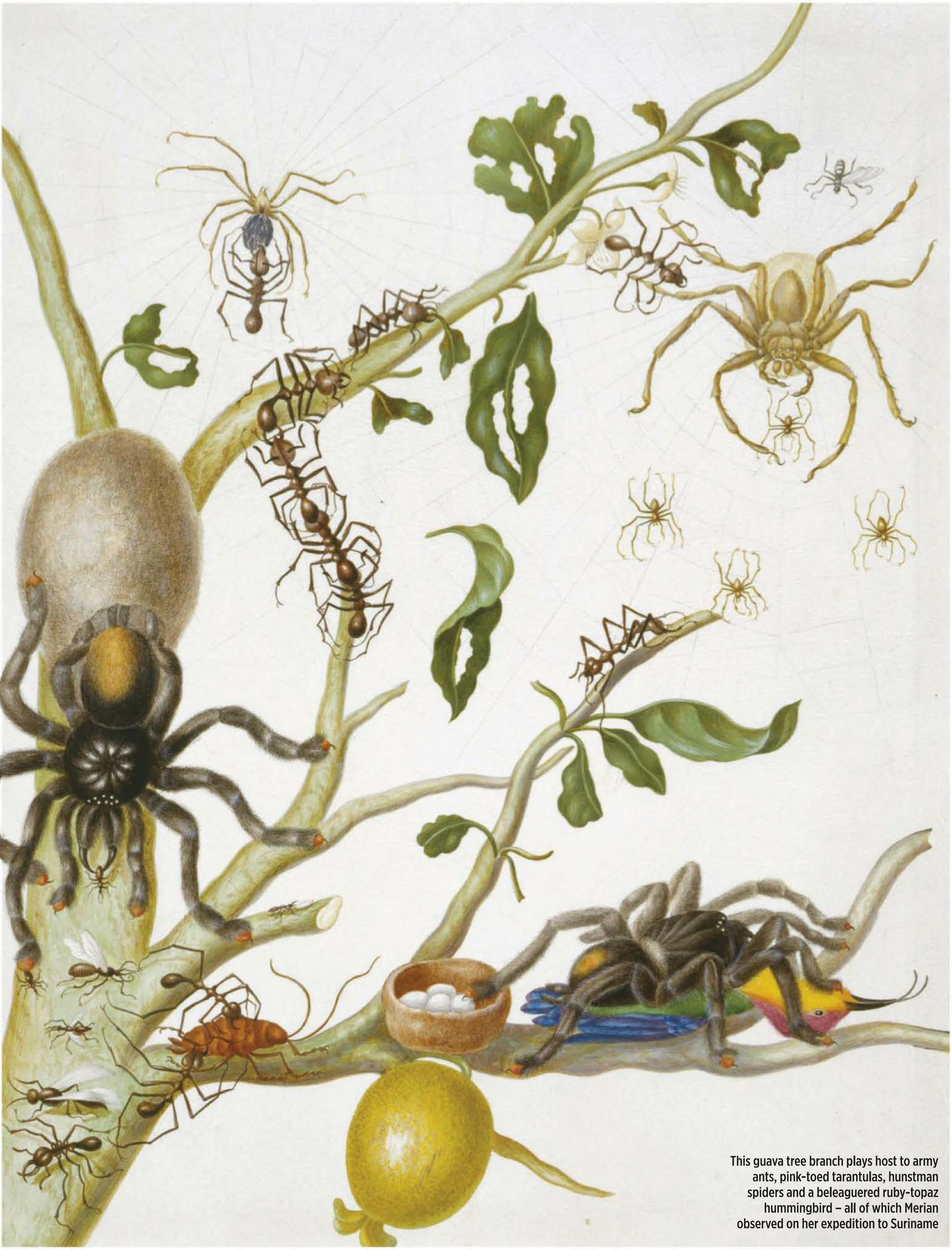
Maria Sibylla Merian had a fascination with insect metamorphosis – depicting insects in all their stages of life – and was just as interested in the pupa and chrysalis as the beautiful butterfly that emerged. It would help bring about a significant advance in the study of nature.

One popular scientific theory that Merian’s illustrations worked to disprove was ‘spontaneous generation’ – the idea that organisms could originate from non-living matter. As such, it was thought that maggots were formed from old meat and moths from old wool, while wasps, with their fierce stings, were thought to emerge from flames. Some people even believed that toads appeared from mud when water was thrown on the ground.

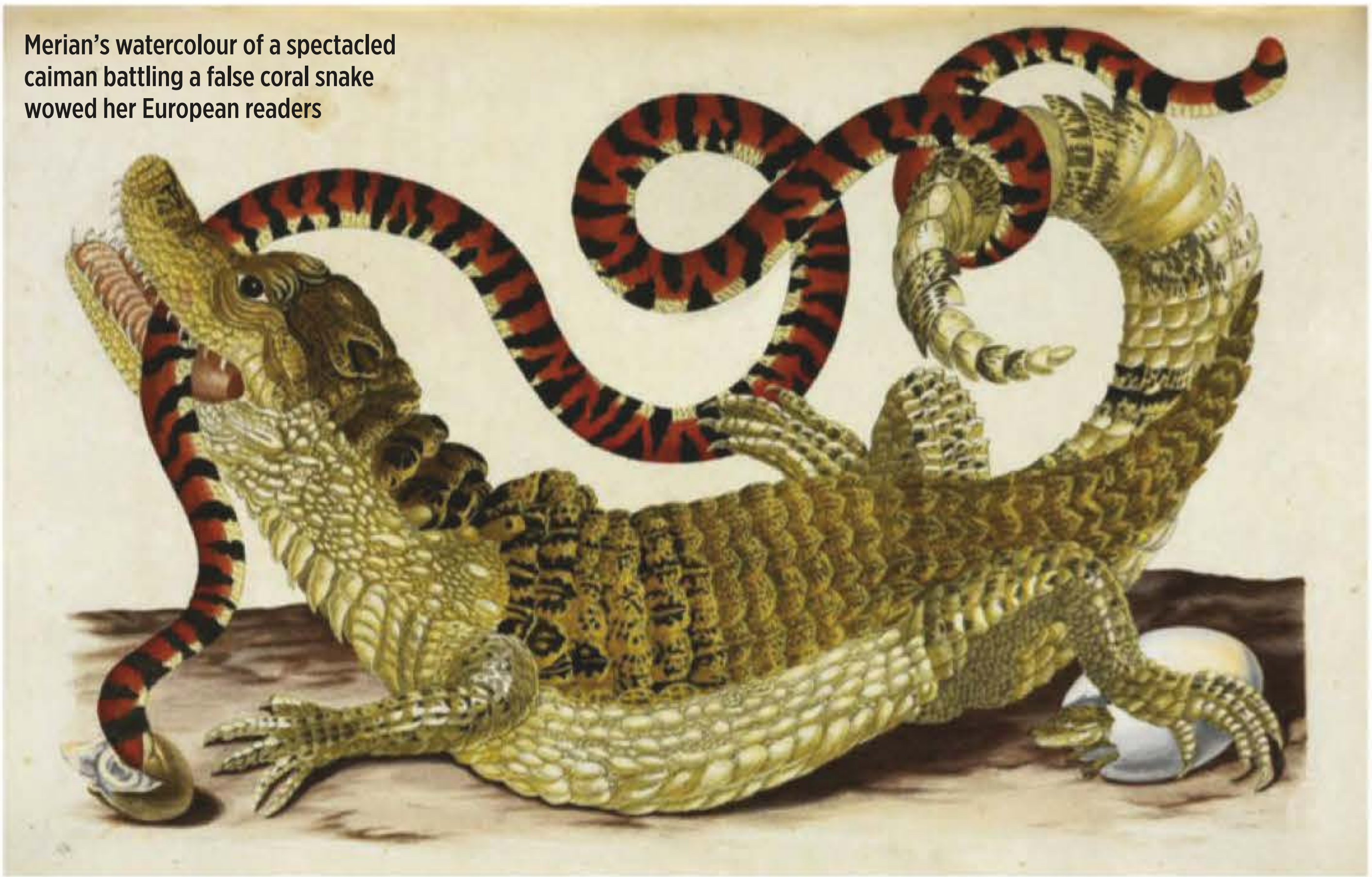
Although this theory dated all the way back to Aristotle, it was still under debate during Merian’s lifetime. In 1668, Italian scientist Francesco Redi (*inset*) came up with an experiment to disprove those who still claimed that there was something in the idea of spontaneous generation. He took two pieces of rotting meat, covering one and leaving the other exposed. As Redi had suspected, maggots only appeared on the uncovered meat, suggesting they appeared through contact with flies, rather than being formed from the meat itself.


MOSCHE DE BACHI DEL SAMBVCO

Like Maria Sibylla Merian, Italian physician and naturalist Francisco Redi observed that insects such as flies developed from larvae



This guava tree branch plays host to army ants, pink-toed tarantulas, hunstman spiders and a beleaguered ruby-topaz hummingbird – all of which Merian observed on her expedition to Suriname



Merian's watercolour of a spectacled caiman battling a false coral snake wowed her European readers

"*Metamorphosis* was not only a monumental artistic achievement; it had a clear scientific message"

◀ maroon communities, to the old Labadist outpost of La Providence, on the hunt for new species.

Merian documented her adventures as she "wandered far out into the wilderness," uncovering insects whose exotic beauty "cannot possibly be rendered with the paintbrush". This was a land where butterflies looked "like polished silver overlaid with the loveliest ultramarine, green and purple" and mammoth white witch moths flapped through the tropical jungles on 11 inch wingspans.

ART AS A SCIENCE

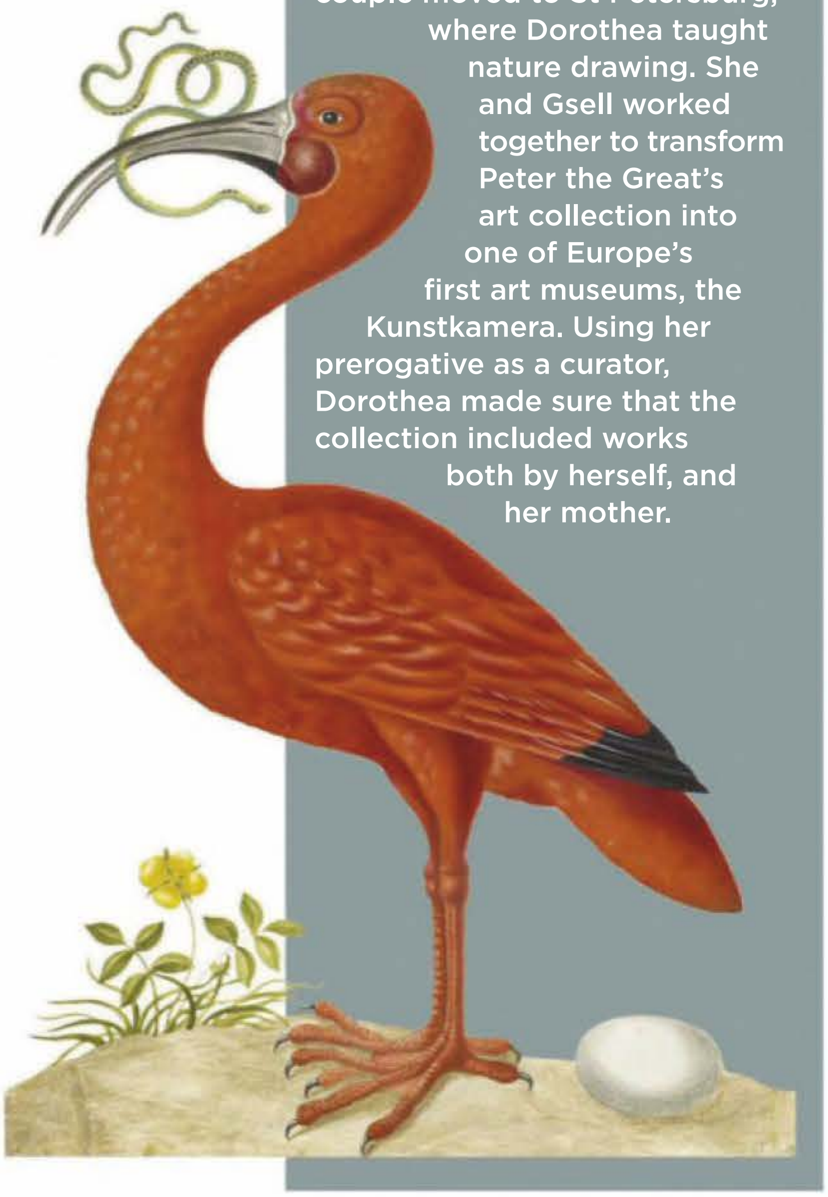
Ultimately, even the extraordinary natural discoveries weren't enough to sustain Merian in Suriname's inhospitable climate. "The heat in this country is staggering, so that one can do no work at all without great difficulty," she wrote. "I myself nearly paid for it with my death." After 21 months, plagued by what may have been malaria or yellow fever, Merian was forced to return to Europe. In June 1701, she and Dorothea boarded the Dutch ship *De Vreede*, armed with multiple specimens preserved in brandy or "dried and well displayed in boxes where they can be seen by all".

Despite being cut short, the trip to Suriname led to what was perhaps Merian's most spectacular work. In 1705, she published *Metamorphosis Insectorum Surinamensium*, (*The Metamorphosis of the Insects of Suriname*), a volume of 60 lavish illustrations depicting 90 insect metamorphoses and 53 plant species. Insects in all their forms appeared alongside frogs, toads, lizards, snakes and spiders, some of which had never been documented by a European before.

The marvels of South America were brought to life for readers back home, with scenes including a spectacled caiman gorging on a false coral snake and a common Surinamese toad carrying eggs on its back. The volume was not only a monumental artistic achievement, it had a clear scientific message that the marvellous insects Merian depicted did not appear from nowhere, but metamorphosed from other forms.

The Suriname volume was the culmination of a career of determined investigation into the natural world. By the time she died in 1717, shortly before she turned 70, Merian had produced a vast and spectacular body of work. In boldly seeking out creatures in their far flung natural habitats, she had revealed that the real beauty of fauna lay in seeing them as part of a bigger, interconnected web of life. In doing so, she pioneered a new way of depicting nature that would influence both artists and scientists for generations to come. ⊙

Merian was 52 when she embarked on her expedition to Suriname, where she laid eyes on scarlet ibis and many other wondrous species



LIKE MOTHER, LIKE DAUGHTERS

Johanna and Dorothea both embraced the natural world

In an era when male family members would pass trades down from generation to generation, Maria Sibylla Merian's daughters, Johanna and Dorothea, both followed in their mother's footsteps and became nature painters. The sisters collaborated with their mother on her various projects and are even thought to have contributed paintings under her name.

Johanna went on to work as a botanical artist, and in 1711 – a decade after her mother and sister's adventure – she moved with her husband to Suriname, where she lived until her death, sometime after 1723. Dorothea, meanwhile, collaborated with her mother on a work on European caterpillars. After being married and widowed by her early thirties, Dorothea began using her mother's maiden name, probably because of its reputation in the art world.

In 1715, she married Swiss painter Georg Gsell and the couple moved to St Petersburg, where Dorothea taught nature drawing. She and Gsell worked together to transform Peter the Great's art collection into one of Europe's first art museums, the Kunstkamera. Using her prerogative as a curator, Dorothea made sure that the collection included works both by herself, and her mother.

GET HOOKED

LISTEN

BBC WORLD SERVICE

The life and legacy of Maria Sibylla Merian is discussed on an episode of *Discovery* on the BBC World Service. *bbc.co.uk/programmes/w3cswd38*

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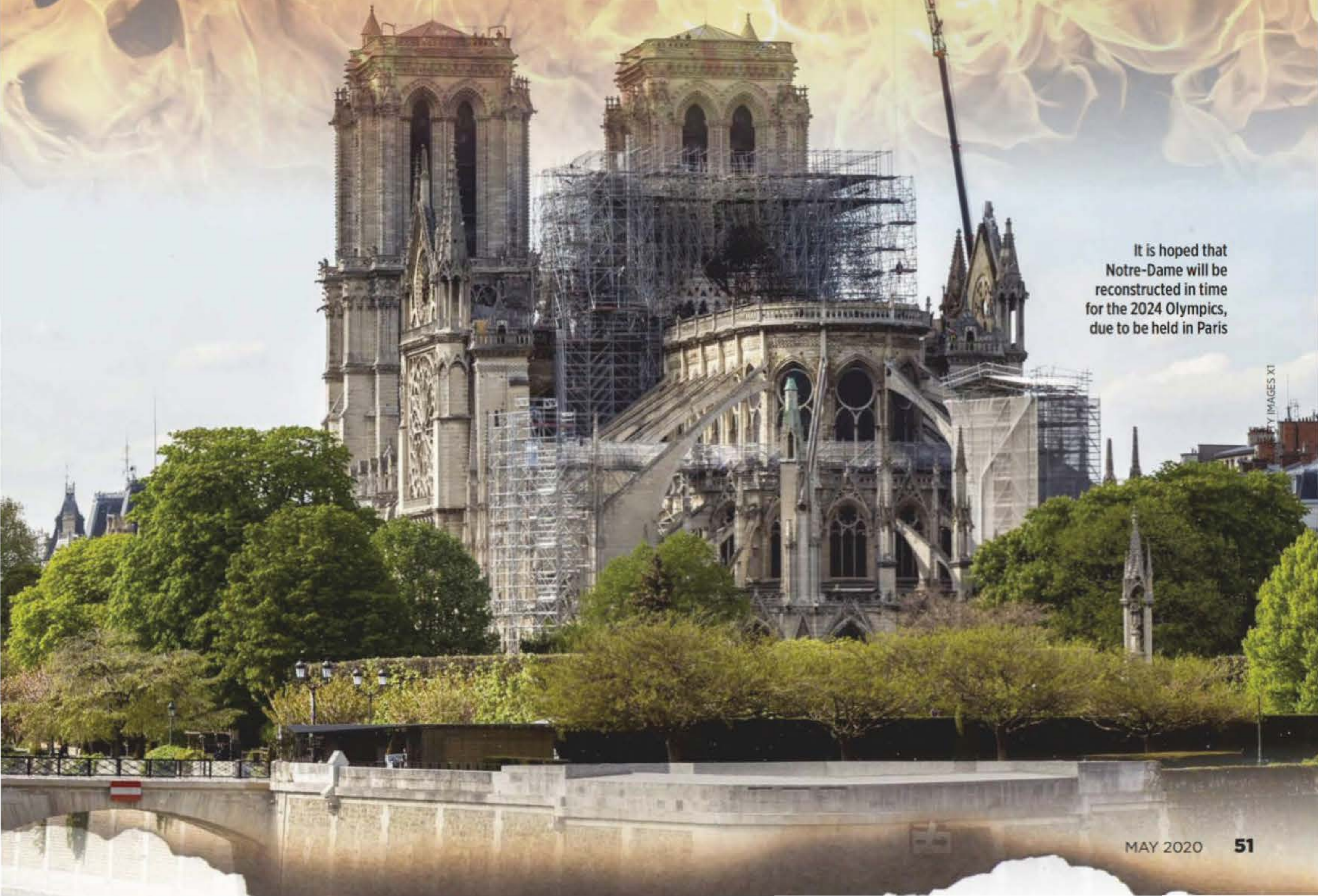
TOP 10

BUILDINGS THAT ROSE FROM THE ASHES

As work continues to determine what can be saved of Paris's Notre-Dame Cathedral after it went up in flames in 2019, **Emma Slattery Williams** explores its story – along with some other famous buildings that have returned from the brink of ruin



It is hoped that Notre-Dame will be reconstructed in time for the 2024 Olympics, due to be held in Paris

Y IMAGES X1

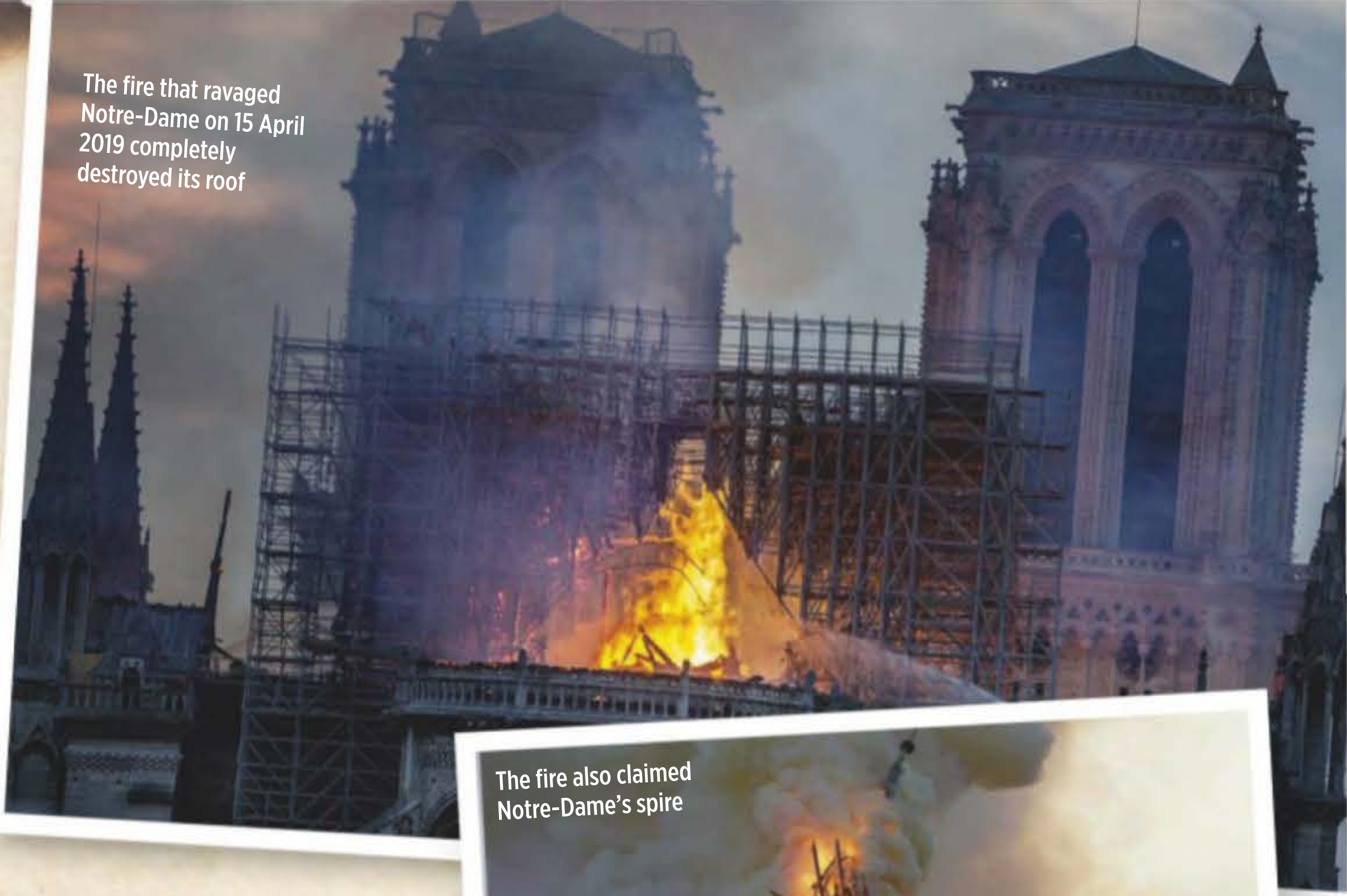
1

NOTRE-DAME CATHEDRAL

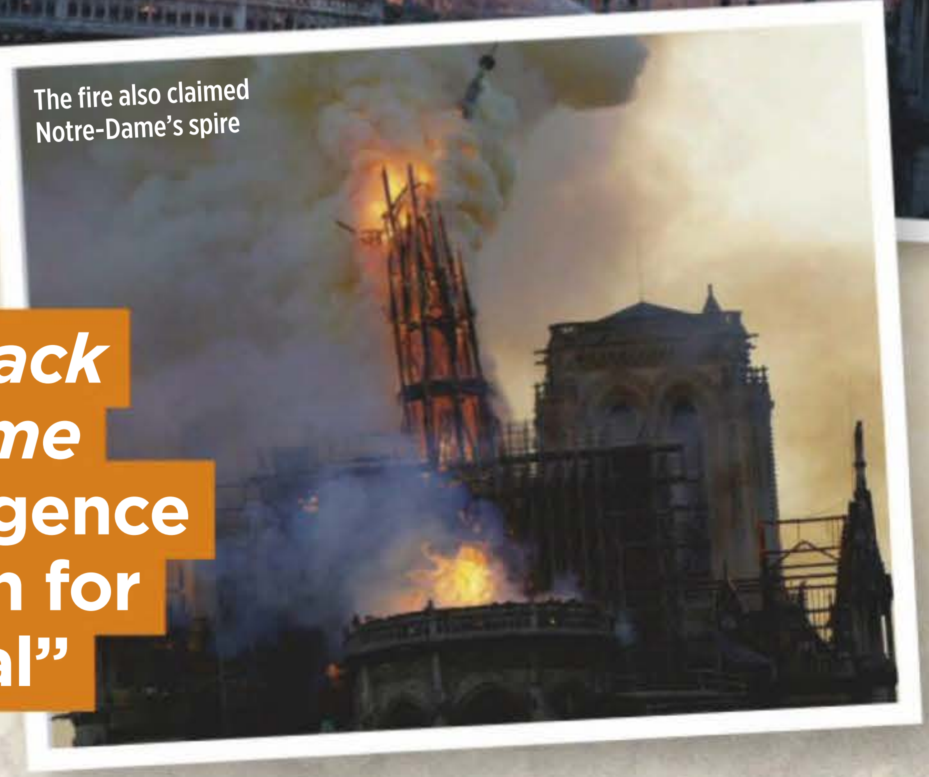
Paris, France

One of the most iconic sites in the French capital, the cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris has dominated the city's skyline for centuries, with the first stone laid in 1163. A devastating fire in 2019 caused severe damage – destroying the roof and spire – and work is ongoing to determine how it will be reconstructed.

This is not the first time, however, that the cathedral has faced adversity. During the French Revolution, Notre-Dame was seen as a symbol of the monarchy; it was ransacked, with many of its windows smashed and treasures stolen, and later reduced to a warehouse. French novelist Victor Hugo sparked a resurgence in appreciation for the cathedral with his 1831 novel *Notre-Dame de Paris* (republished in English two years later with a more familiar title: *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*) and renovations were undertaken to restore it to its Gothic splendour.

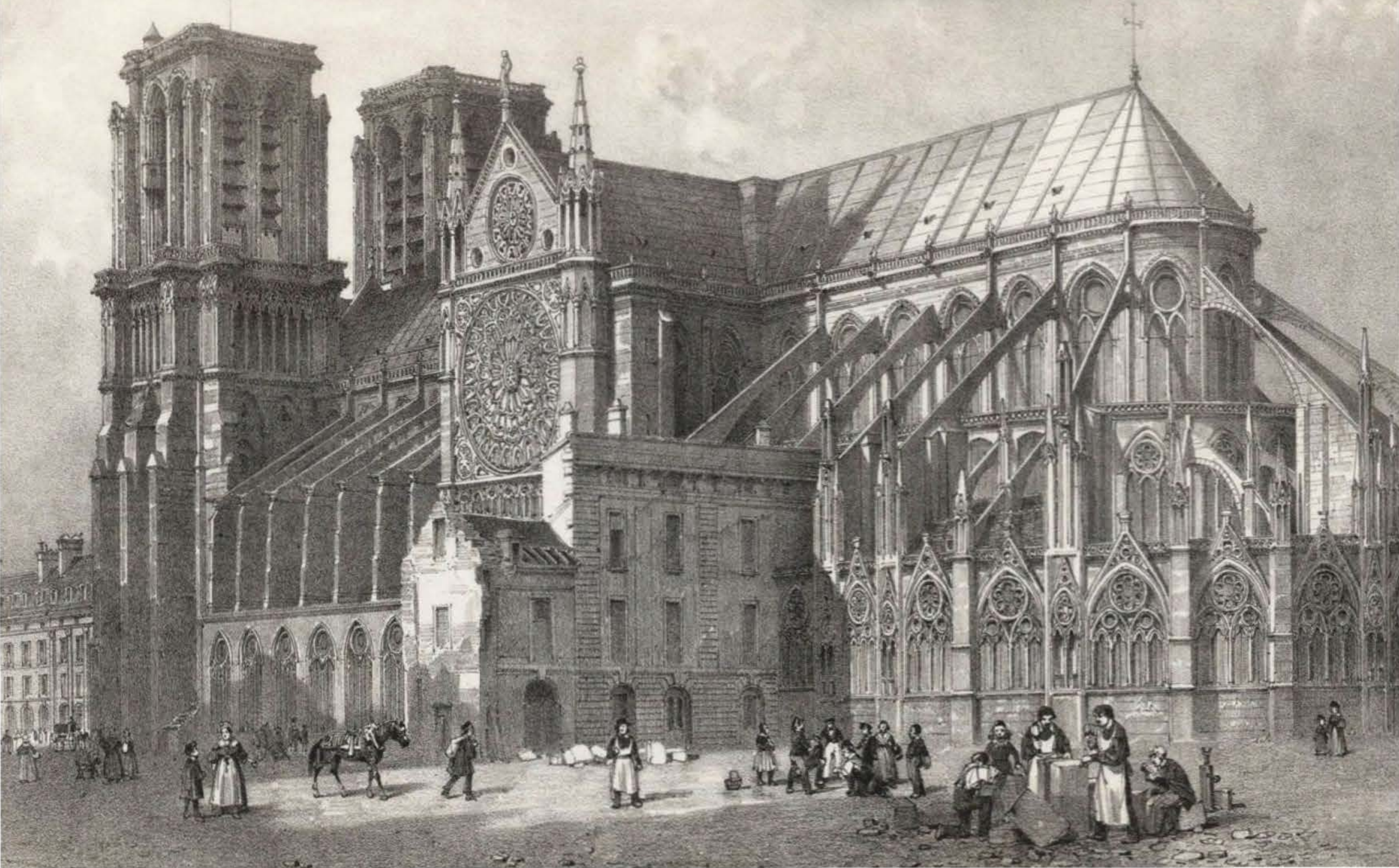


The fire that ravaged Notre-Dame on 15 April 2019 completely destroyed its roof



The fire also claimed Notre-Dame's spire

> ***"The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* sparked a resurgence in appreciation for the cathedral"**



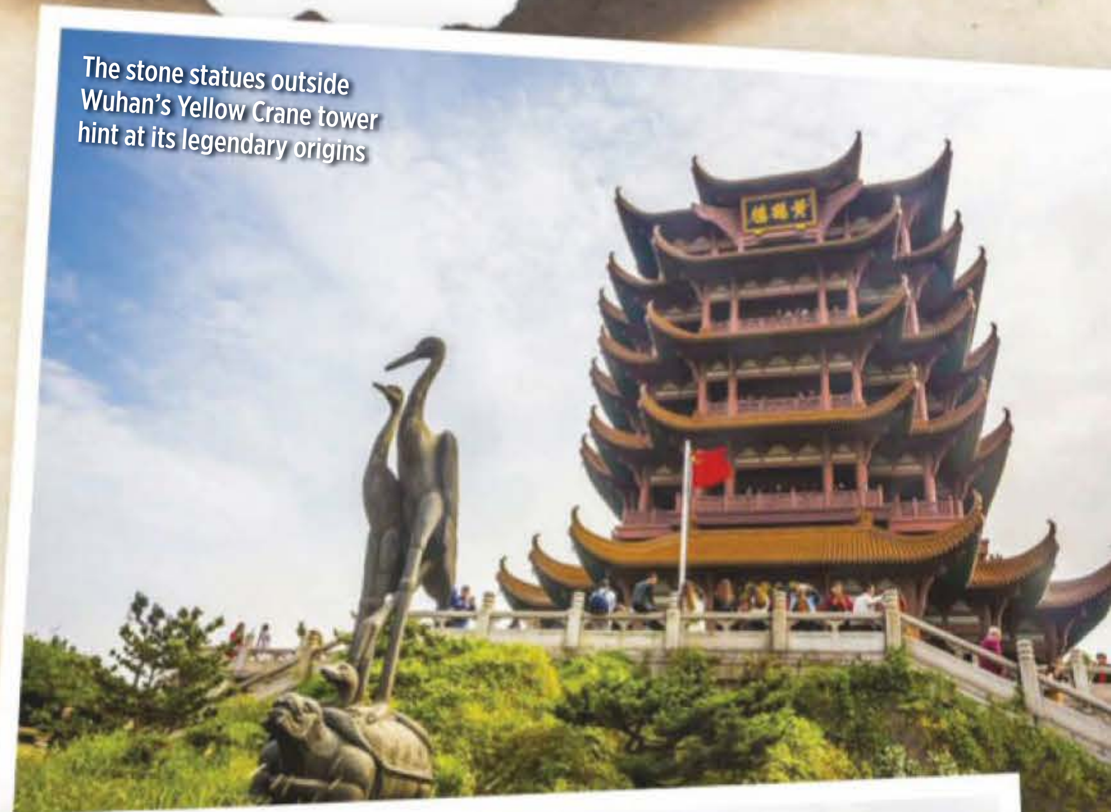
Notre-Dame de Paris as it was in the 1800s prior to its restoration; conspicuously absent is its central spire, which was added during these works

2

YELLOW CRANE TOWER

Wuhan, China

Wuhan's Yellow Crane Tower is champion among buildings that will not stay down: it's been rebuilt no fewer than seven times following damage from fires and warfare. The traditional Chinese tower has existed in some form since AD 223 and is thought to have been designed as a lookout post. The current tower was built near the site of the original, in 1985. The name 'Yellow Crane' is ascribed to a legend about a wine merchant who was kind to an immortal being disguised as a poor man. To reward his generosity, the merchant was given a dancing crane that brought him so much business that he became wealthy – and subsequently built the tower to commemorate his good fortune.



The stone statues outside Wuhan's Yellow Crane tower hint at its legendary origins

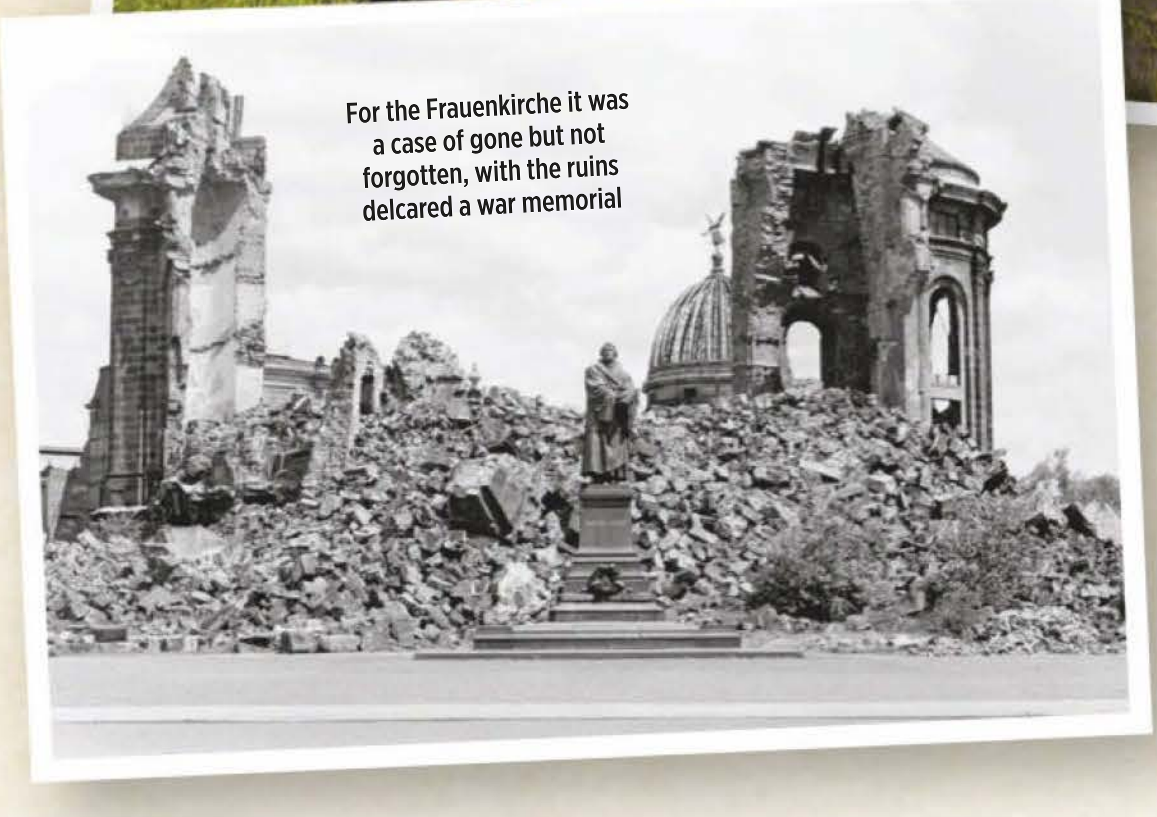
3

FRAUENKIRCHE

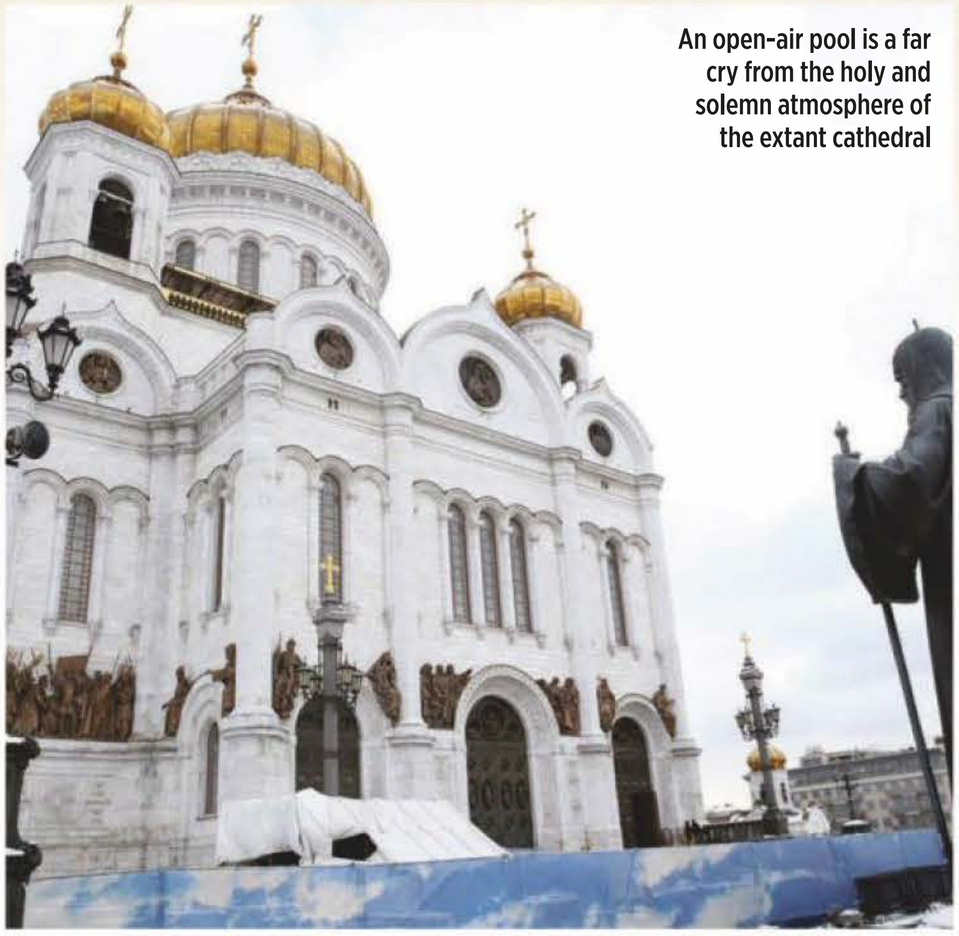
Dresden, Germany

The Allied bombing of Dresden in February 1945 caused catastrophic damage to the city, eradicating much of its Baroque architecture. In just three days, the city's skyline had completely altered. Among the casualties was the Frauenkirche, a Lutheran church with a unique bell-shaped dome, which collapsed after three days of raids.

The church was left in ruins for almost 50 years as a reminder of what had happened, with the site declared a memorial against war and a symbol for peace in the 1960s. Rebuilding commenced in 1994 – four years after the reunification of Germany – and was completed by 2005. In an ironic twist, a British silversmith whose father had taken part in the bombing raid was one of the craftsmen who created a cross for the top of the church.



For the Frauenkirche it was a case of gone but not forgotten, with the ruins delcared a war memorial



An open-air pool is a far cry from the holy and solemn atmosphere of the extant cathedral

4

CATHEDRAL OF CHRIST THE SAVIOUR

Moscow, Russia

Moscow's Cathedral of Christ the Saviour was built on the orders of Tsar Alexander I to honour Russia's dead and glorify its military prowess following victory over Napoleon Bonaparte in 1812. Yet it was a tortured birth: Alexander died before construction had been completed, and his successor – his brother, Nicholas I – disliked the design so much that he had his favourite architect create a new one.

The cathedral was finally finished in 1883, but by the mid-1920s it had been earmarked for demolition by Stalin, and he eventually gave the order for it to be dynamited in 1931 to make way for a monument to socialism – the Palace of the Soviets. The 'palace' was equally troubled: work halted when Germany invaded Russia in 1941, and abandoned thereafter. A sea change came in 1958, when the foundations of Christ the Saviour were converted into an open-air pool. In 1990, the Russian Orthodox Church was granted permission to rebuild the cathedral, works that were completed in 2000.

▶

GETTY IMAGES X6

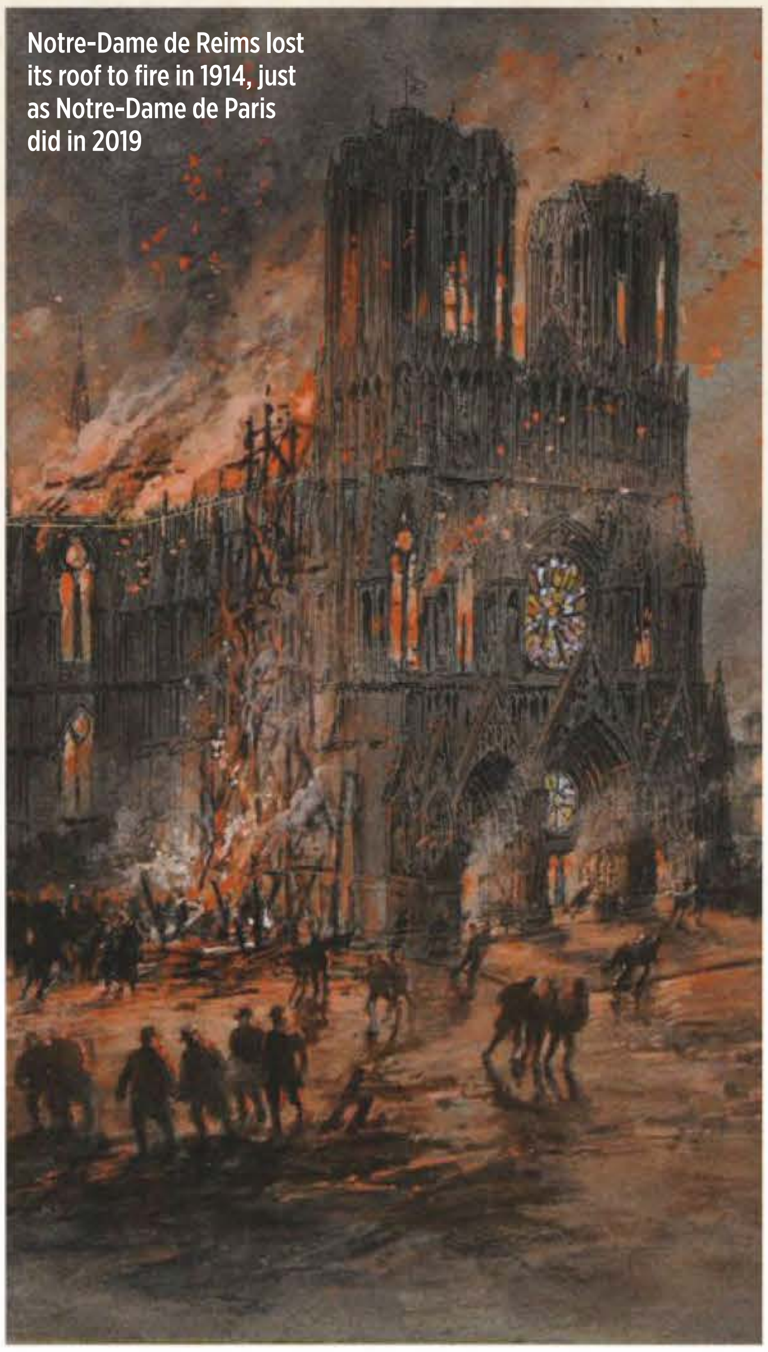
5

REIMS CATHEDRAL

Reims, France

It may be logical to think that Paris was once the traditional home of French coronations, but that honour actually belongs to the city of Reims, 80 miles to the east. Its cathedral – properly known as Notre-Dame de Reims, similar to its famous Parisian cousin – has played host to 25 coronations since the 13th century. The monarchical link dates back earlier still to another church on the same site, where Clovis, King of the Franks, was baptised in the late 5th or early 6th century. Befitting its royal patronage, Reims Cathedral was also home to the Holy Ampulla, the vial that held the oil used for anointing French kings which, according to legend, was brought from heaven by a dove.

During World War I, the cathedral was used as a hospital. It suffered considerable damage from bombing, and scaffolding around one of its towers caught fire, destroying the timber frame and melting the lead roof. Images of the devastated cathedral were used in anti-German propaganda and led to accusations that Germany was deliberately targeting France's cultural heritage. Restoration began in 1919 and continued until 1938, a year or so before the start of World War II – amazingly it emerged from that conflict mostly unscathed.



Notre-Dame de Reims lost its roof to fire in 1914, just as Notre-Dame de Paris did in 2019

ALAMY X1, GETTY IMAGES X4

The steps of the Royal Exchange are traditionally the place from which royal proclamations are announced by a crier

6

THE ROYAL EXCHANGE

London, England

London's centre of commerce was opened in 1571 for the purpose of trading stocks and with the intention of rivalling Antwerp's own financial exchange, the Bourse. By 1660, it housed retail businesses too, but fell victim to the Great Fire of 1666, along with a third of the city.

A new Baroque exchange opened in 1669, but it, too, was consumed by fire, in 1838. The third and current exchange was opened by Queen Victoria in 1844 – this time it was designed to resemble Rome's Pantheon. The building survived the Blitz with minor damage, but once World War II was over, the traders moved out and it fell into disrepair. Since then it has been used as a theatre, briefly returned as a financial exchange and is now home to restaurants and shops.

7

ST MARK'S CAMPANILE

Venice, Italy

Residents of Venice suffered quite a shock on 14 July 1902, when St Mark's Campanile – the bell tower of St Mark's Basilica – crumbled to the ground, just a few days after visitors had spotted a new crack in the structure. Miraculously, no one was injured: apparently, the sound of falling stone within the tower warned people to flee, with the result that the only casualty was the caretaker's cat. Almost as soon as the collapse had happened, the local government pledged to rebuild the tower exactly as it was – with the addition of an elevator and some reinforcements. It was inaugurated in 1912 on St Mark's feast day.

The current, fluted-brick campanile is one of the most recognisable sights in Venice

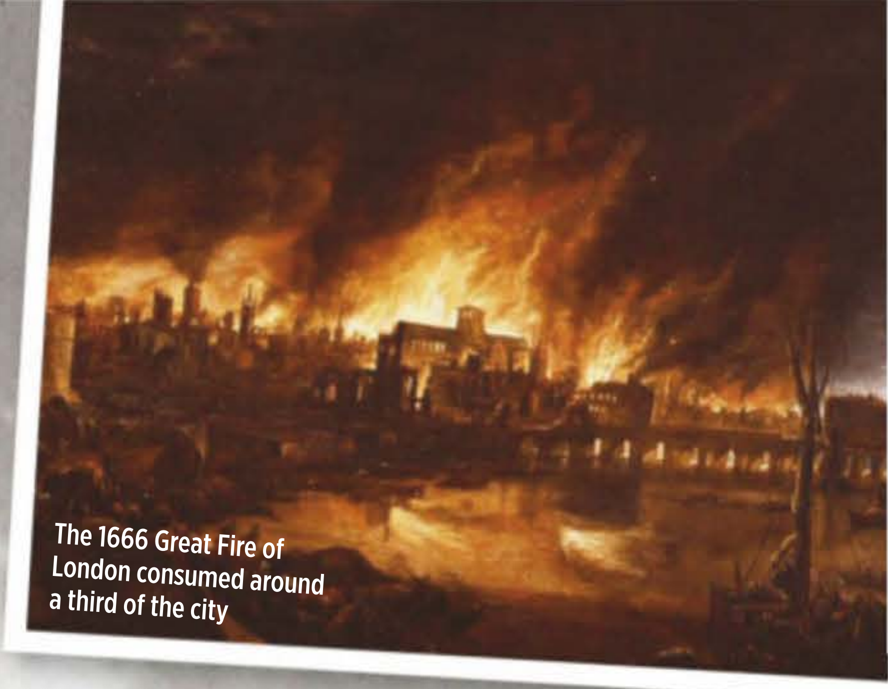
8

ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

London, England

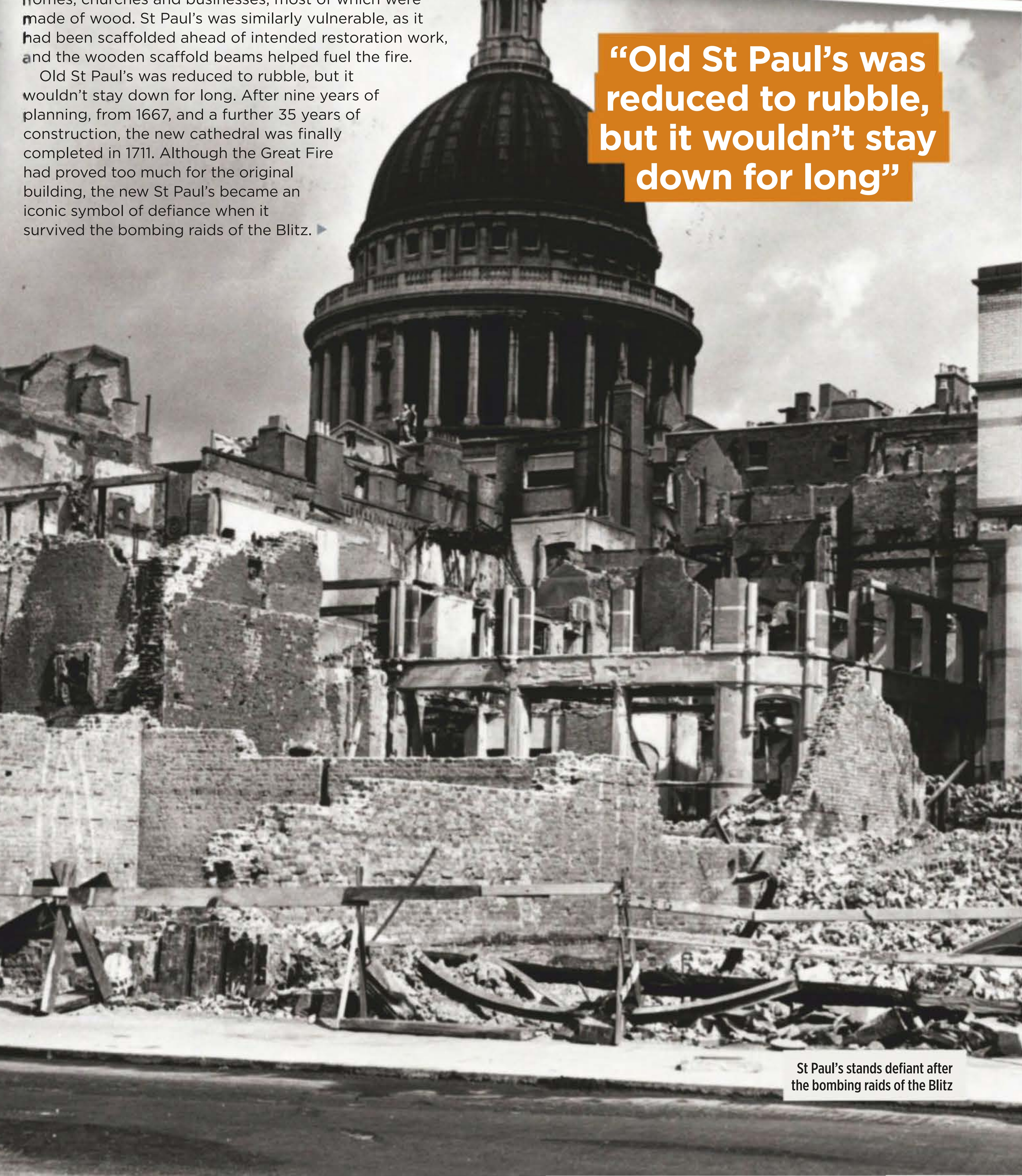
The current St Paul's Cathedral is actually the fifth one to be built on that spot – the previous one, now known as Old St Paul's, was consecrated in 1240 and was the spiritual heart of medieval London. Then, in 1666, the Great Fire ravaged the capital, destroying thousands of homes, churches and businesses, most of which were made of wood. St Paul's was similarly vulnerable, as it had been scaffolded ahead of intended restoration work, and the wooden scaffold beams helped fuel the fire.

Old St Paul's was reduced to rubble, but it wouldn't stay down for long. After nine years of planning, from 1667, and a further 35 years of construction, the new cathedral was finally completed in 1711. Although the Great Fire had proved too much for the original building, the new St Paul's became an iconic symbol of defiance when it survived the bombing raids of the Blitz. ▶

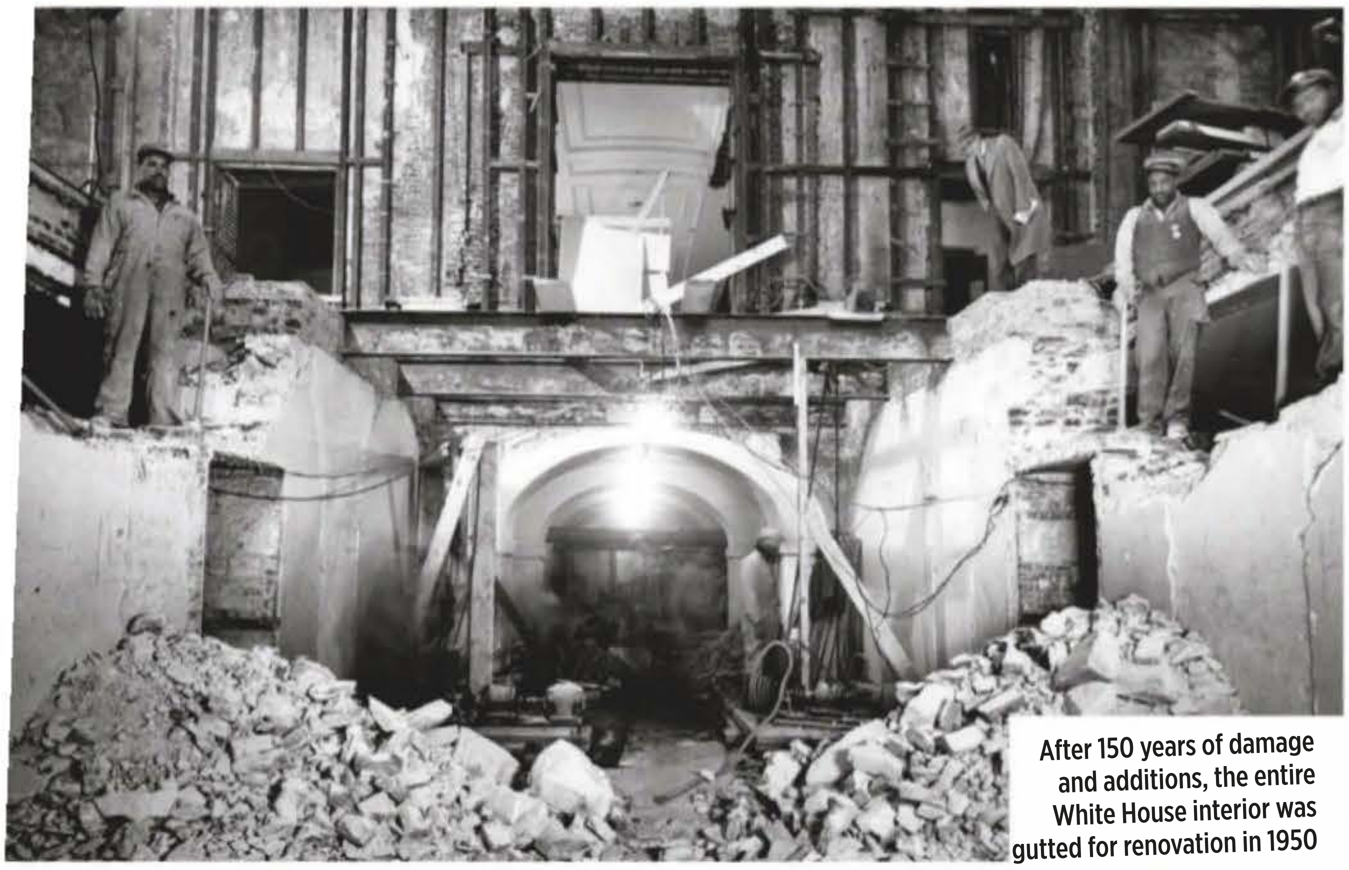


The 1666 Great Fire of London consumed around a third of the city

> "Old St Paul's was reduced to rubble, but it wouldn't stay down for long"



St Paul's stands defiant after the bombing raids of the Blitz



After 150 years of damage and additions, the entire White House interior was gutted for renovation in 1950

9

THE WHITE HOUSE

Washington, DC, US

The home of the US President has a shorter history than the other buildings in this list – its first resident, President John Adams and his wife, moved into the unfinished mansion in 1800 – but that hasn't saved it from destruction.

In 1814, amidst the fighting of the confusingly named War of 1812, British troops entered Washington and burned down public buildings n retaliation for a similar attack on York modern-day Toronto) the year before. The White House and the majority of its contents were destroyed. The rebuilding process began almost immediately, and it was ready or President James Monroe to take up esidence in 1817.

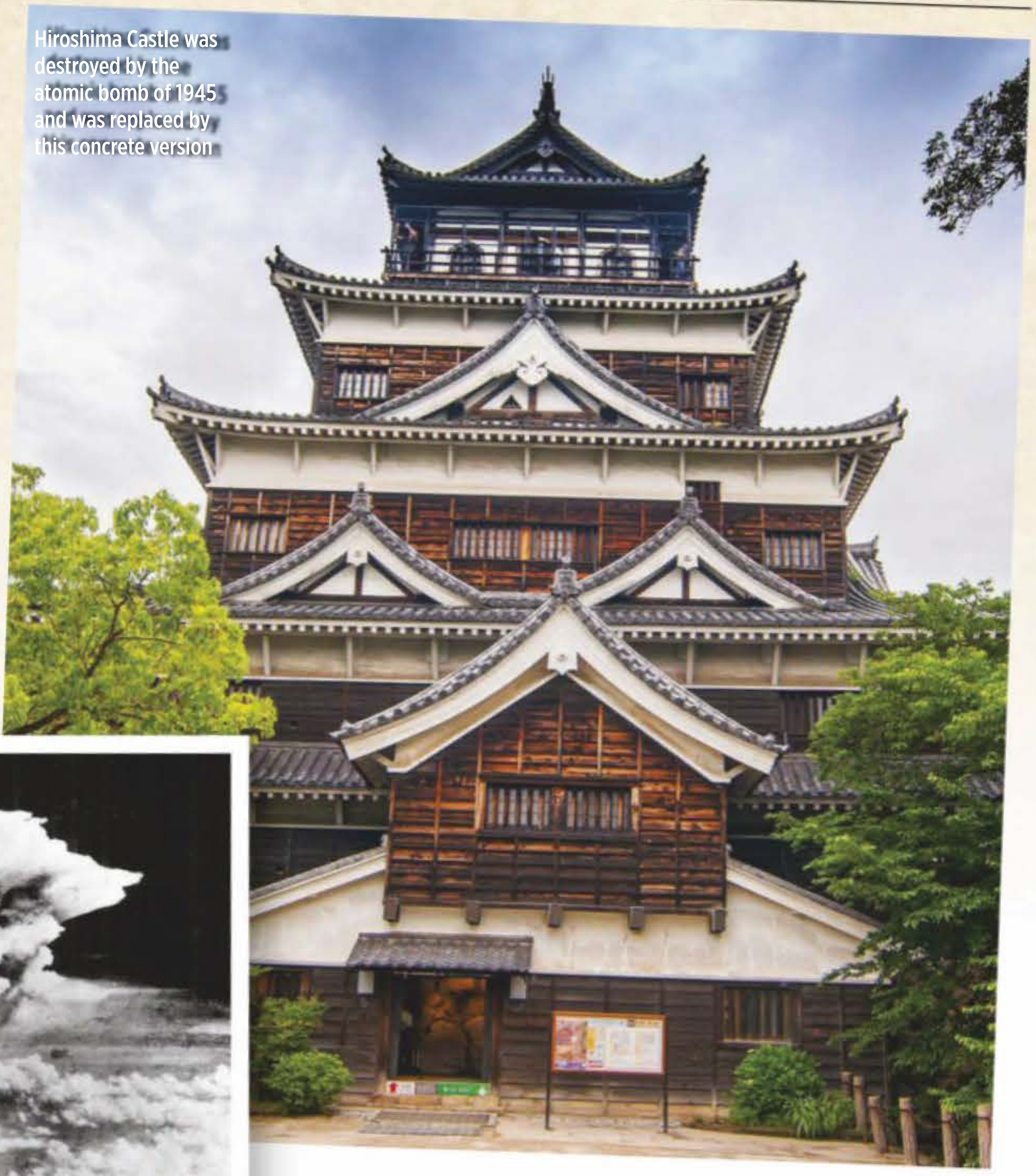
10

HIROSHIMA CASTLE

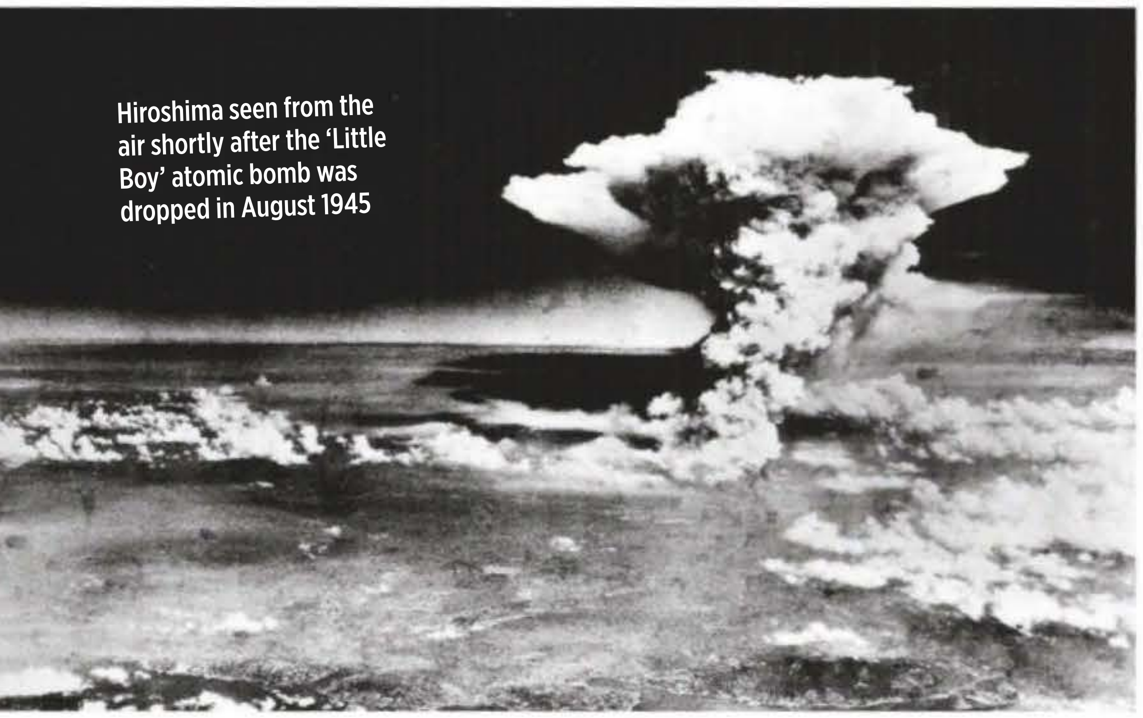
Hiroshima, Japan

The original Hiroshima Castle was built between 1589 and 1591 by a local warlord, and the city gradually grew around it. Constructed with stone walls and three moats, it was a formidable stronghold that survived through the Meiji Restoration (*see page 22*), when many other castles were destroyed. On 6 August 1945, an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, annihilating the city and killing more than 80,000 people. The castle was blown away by the force of the bomb blast, which fell just under a mile away. A replica castle of concrete was built in 1958 and now houses a museum of the city. More recently, other related structures, such as the castle's main gate, have been rebuilt using original methods.

ALAMY X2, GETTY IMAGES X1



Hiroshima Castle was destroyed by the atomic bomb of 1945 and was replaced by this concrete version



Hiroshima seen from the air shortly after the 'Little Boy' atomic bomb was dropped in August 1945

GET HOOKED

WATCH

BBC FOUR

A BBC Four doc on saving Notre-Dame Cathedral is due to air in mid-April

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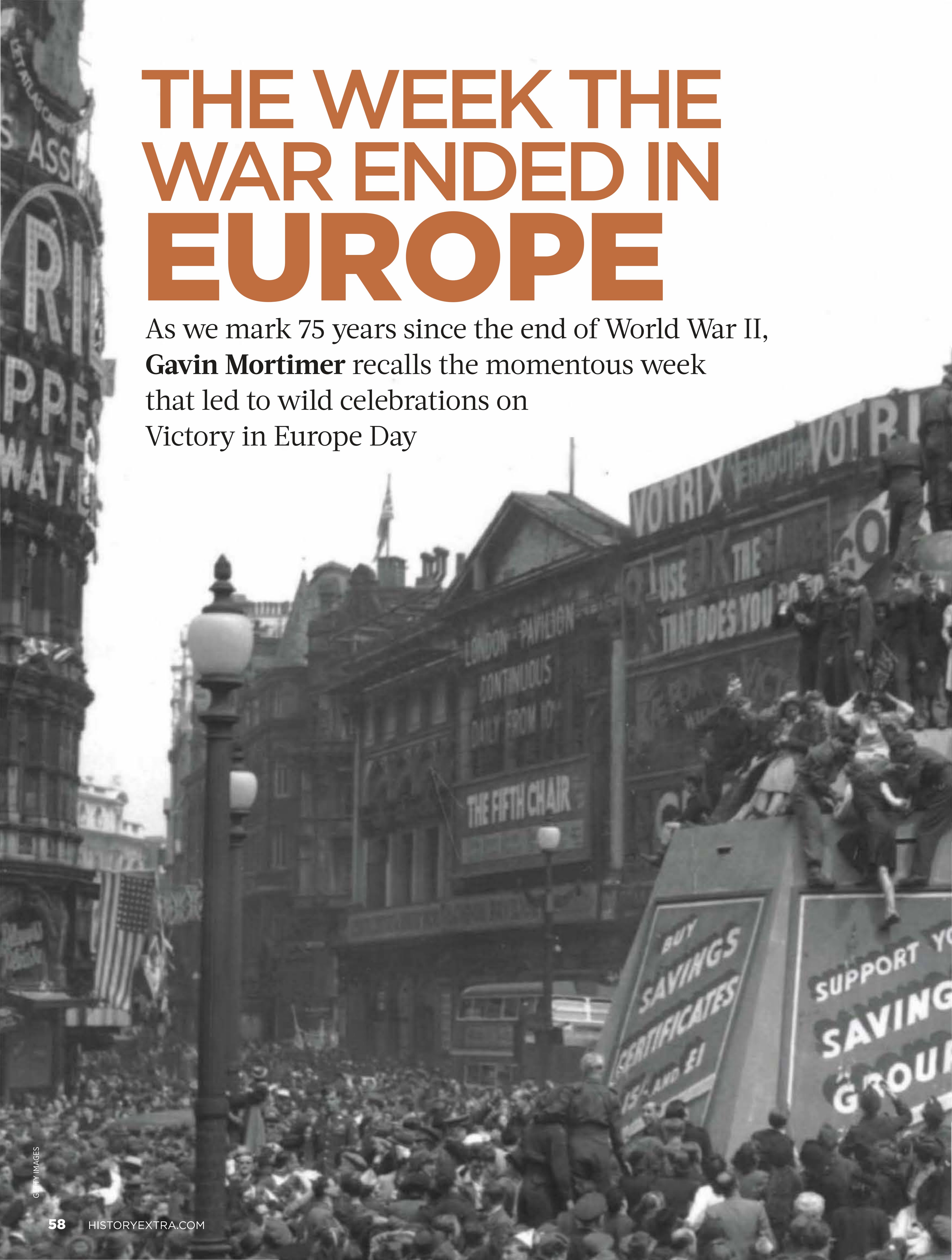
THE WEEK THE WAR ENDED IN EUROPE

As we mark 75 years since the end of World War II, **Gavin Mortimer** recalls the momentous week that led to wild celebrations on Victory in Europe Day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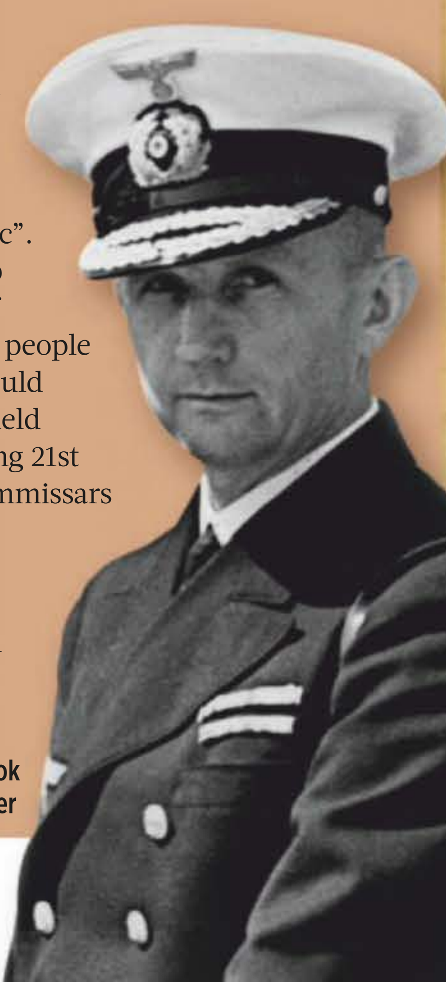
Excited civilians celebrate Italy's liberation with British soldiers

30 APRIL

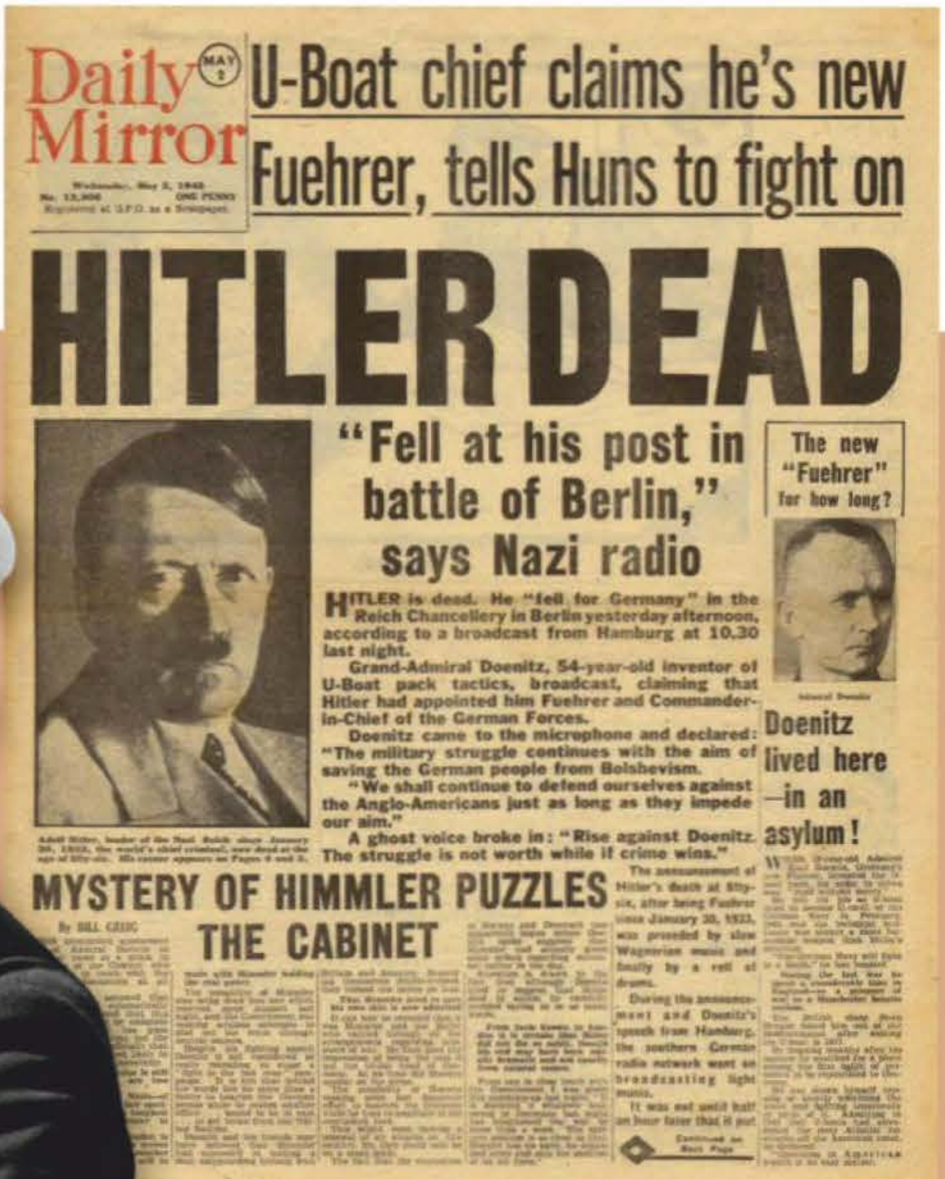
"The amazing news is that Mussolini is dead," wrote Vere Hodgson in her diary. The charity worker in war-torn London also noted that it was snowing in the capital. The Italian dictator Benito Mussolini had in fact been hanged by partisans two days earlier and, on 29 April, Italians had received more good news with the unconditional surrender of German armies in their country. His dream of a 1,000-year Reich in ruins, Adolf Hitler and his wife, Eva Braun, killed themselves in the bunker under the Chancellery in Berlin as Soviet troops closed in. In his last will and testament, the Nazi leader appointed Admiral Karl Dönitz as head of state.

1 MAY

The Allies first heard of Hitler's death when a Hamburg radio station announced that he died "fighting to the last breath against Bolshevism". Dönitz addressed the nation and described the Führer's death as "heroic". He added: "I am taking over the leadership of the German people in this grave hour of destiny. My first task is to save the German people from annihilation." To this end, Dönitz would surrender northwest Germany to British Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery, commanding 21st Army Group, and instructed the Reichskommissars (Reich Commissioners) in Czechoslovakia, Holland, Denmark and Norway to bring hostilities to a peaceful conclusion. The realisation that the war was lost led Joseph Goebbels, Hitler's Minister of Propaganda, to kill himself and his six children.



Karl Dönitz briefly took over as German leader



Daily Mirror

MAY 2

U-Boat chief claims he's new Fuehrer, tells Huns to fight on

HITLER DEAD

"Fell at his post in battle of Berlin," says Nazi radio

HITLER is dead. He "fell for Germany" in the Reich Chancellery in Berlin yesterday afternoon, according to a broadcast from Hamburg at 10.30 last night.

Grand-Admiral Doenitz, 54-year-old inventor of U-Boat pack tactics, broadcast, claiming that Hitler had appointed him Fuehrer and Commander-in-Chief of the German Forces.

Doenitz came to the microphone and declared: "The military struggle continues with the aim of saving the German people from Bolshevism.

"We shall continue to defend ourselves against the Anglo-Americans just as long as they impede our aim."

A ghost voice broke in: "Rise against Doenitz. The struggle is not worth while if crime wins."

The announcement of Hitler's death at fifty-six, after being Fuehrer since January 30, 1933, was preceded by slow Wagnerian music and finally by a roll of drums.

During the announcement and Doenitz's speech from Hamburg, the southern German radio network went on broadcasting light music.

It was not until half an hour later that it put

Continued on Back Page

The new "Fuehrer" for how long?

Doenitz lived here—in an asylum!

MYSTERY OF HIMMLER PUZZLES THE CABINET

By BILL GREIG

Newspapers said Dönitz intended to fight on, but he knew the war was lost

ALAMY X1, GETTY IMAGES X5, MIRRORPIX X1

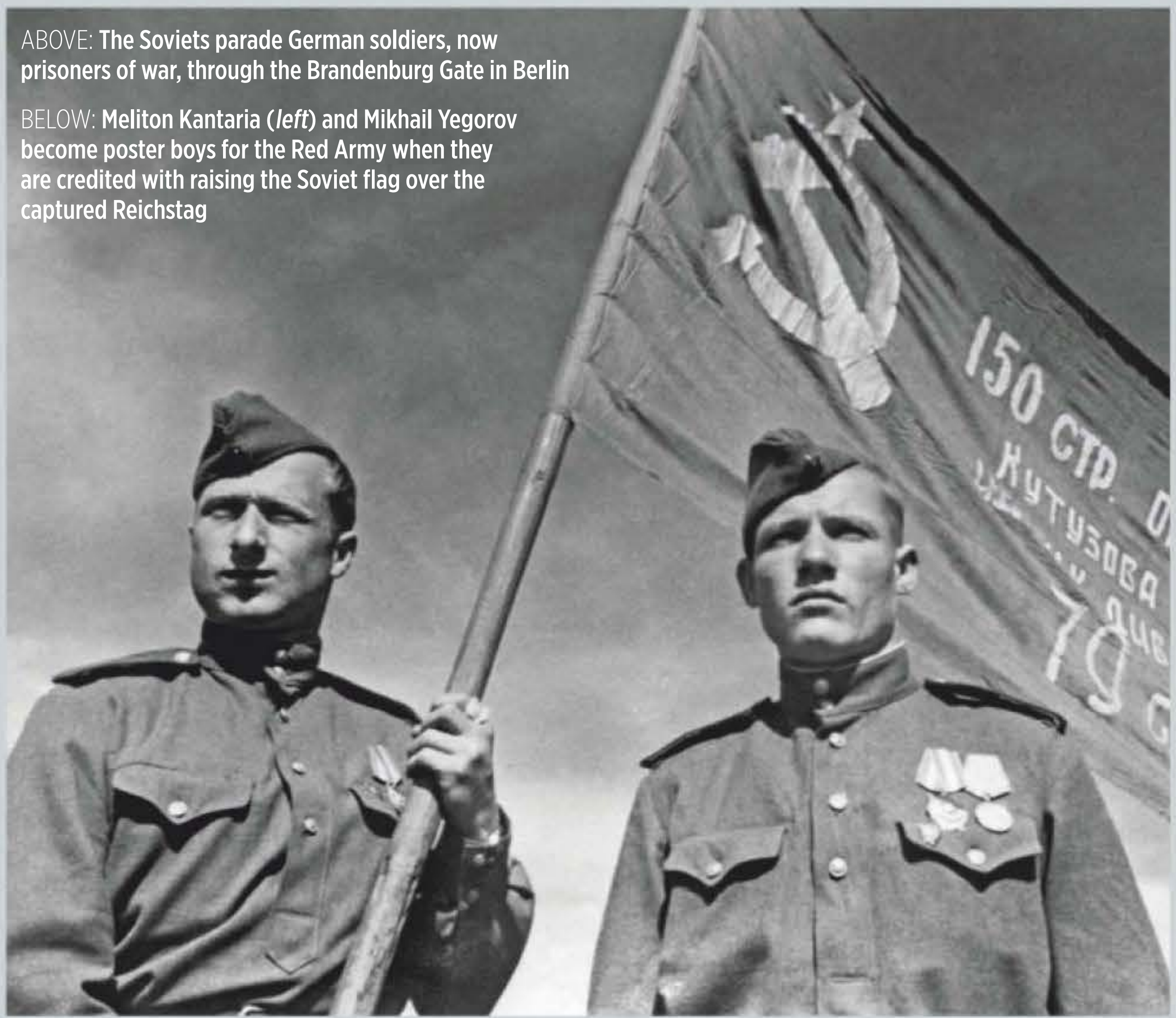
2 MAY

The British press had no inkling of Dönitz's intentions and the front-page headline of *The Daily Record* for 2 May suggested that the war was far from over: "Death of Hitler, Dönitz says he'll fight on". In reality, there was no fight left in the Third Reich and the Russians accepted the German surrender in Berlin, sending messages to all enemy troops to lay down their arms: "We promise honourable treatment. Each officer can keep his side arms. Each officer and man can take his luggage with him." Further west, Montgomery receives a message from General Günther Blumentritt, commanding all German land forces that remain between the Baltic and the Weser river, in which he offers to surrender.

Elsewhere, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill was naturally in good spirits during dinner with celebrated playwright, actor and composer Noël Coward, as well as the society hostess Lady Juliet Duff. "A lovely evening," Coward wrote in his diary. "There he was, gossiping away with us, the man who had carried England through the black years, and he looked so well and cheerful and unrestrained."

ABOVE: **The Soviets parade German soldiers, now prisoners of war, through the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin**

BELOW: **Meliton Kantaria (*left*) and Mikhail Yegorov become poster boys for the Red Army when they are credited with raising the Soviet flag over the captured Reichstag**



Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery (*far left*) described it as a "great moment" when German officers saluted under the Union Jack

3 MAY

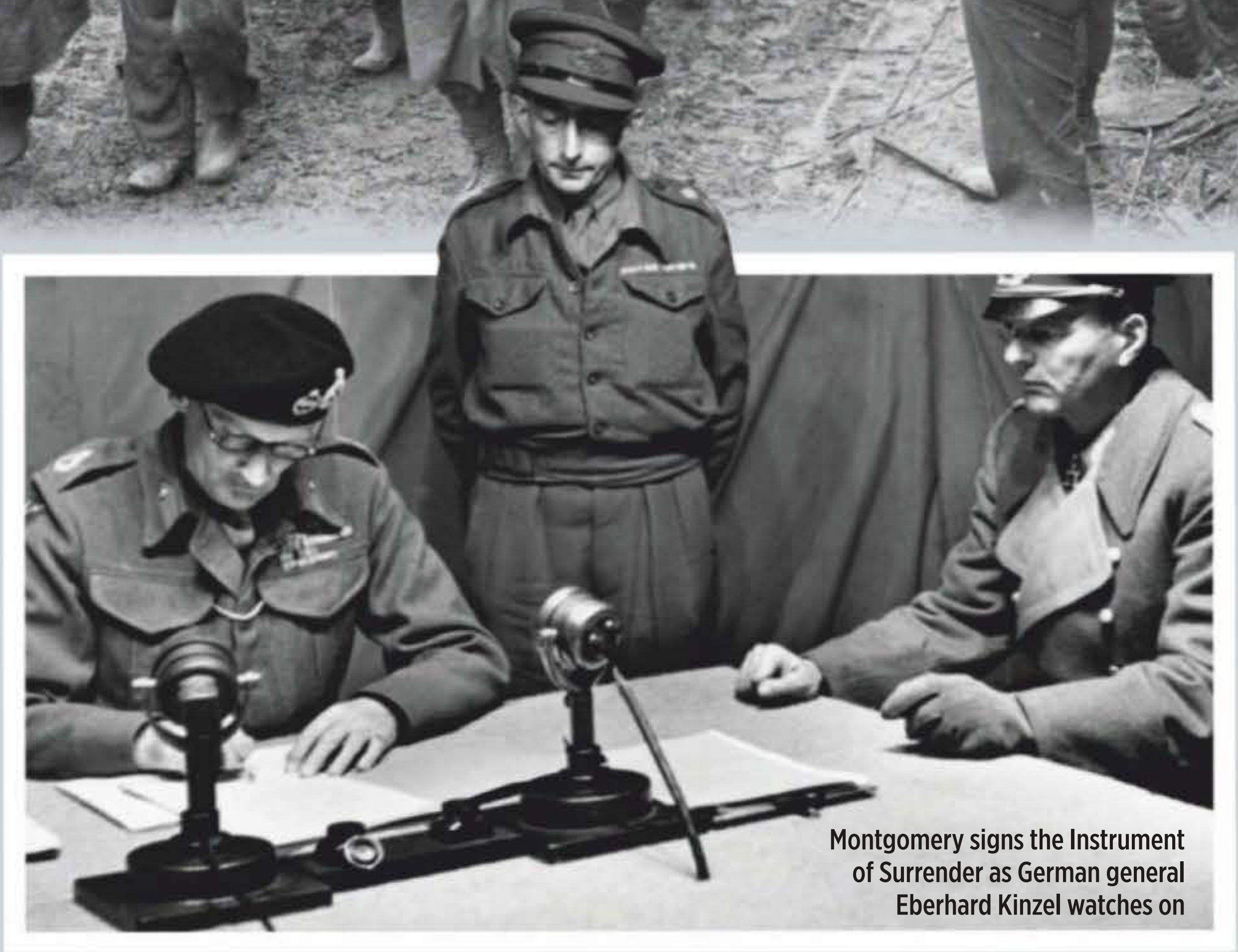
At 9.25am, Lieutenant William Knowlton of the 87th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, in the US Army, encountered elements of the Russian 191st Infantry Division, some 85 miles north of Berlin. Knowlton and his Russian counterpart embraced, and then to mark the meeting of their two nations the officers drank toasts to Soviet premier Stalin and US President Roosevelt with a bottle of Knowlton's cognac.

One hundred miles to the west, Montgomery was beginning surrender negotiations with a delegation of Germans sent by Dönitz. "I kept them waiting for a few minutes, and then came out of my caravan and walked towards them," recalled the Field Marshal. "They all saluted, under the Union Jack. It was a great moment." Montgomery demanded the unconditional surrender of all German forces. "If you refuse," he warned, "I shall go on with the battle." ▸

The US Ninth Army was one of the forces advancing deep into Germany, taking thousands of prisoners of war

4 MAY

Dönitz accepted the terms laid out by Montgomery, who assembled the press corps and read the Instrument of Surrender applicable to all German forces in Holland, northwest Germany and Denmark. The ceasefire is set to take effect at 8am the next day. Montgomery then drafted his final message to his armies: "Let us embark on what lies ahead full of joy and optimism. We have won the German war. Let us now win the peace." The first challenge of the peace is how to manage one and a half million German prisoners of war, and another million of their wounded comrades. "Germany surrendering in all directions," wrote Noël Coward. "VE Day imminent."



Montgomery signs the Instrument of Surrender as German general Eberhard Kinzel watches on

5 MAY

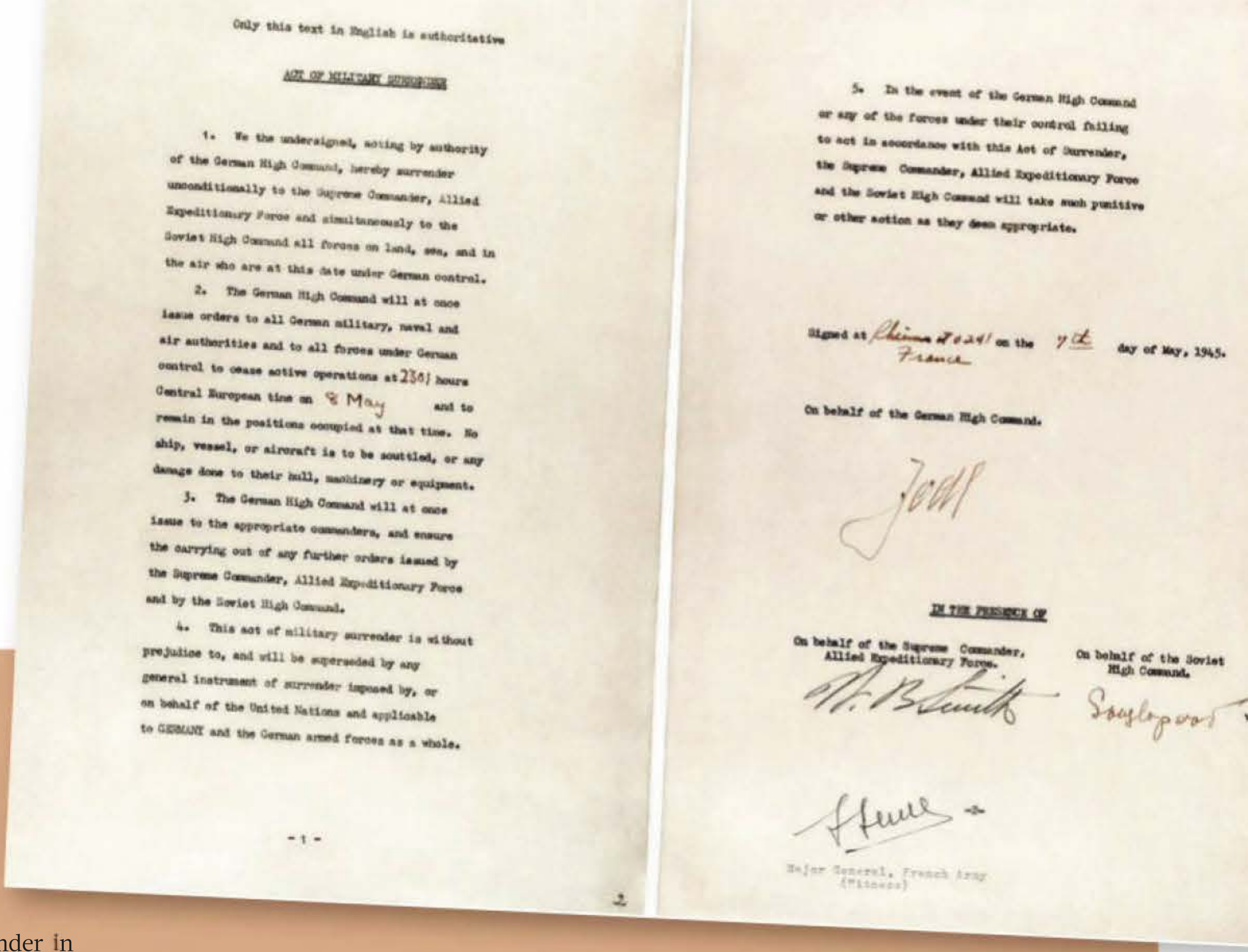
At 8am, the ceasefire came into effect. "I'd been sitting in a ditch watching a farmhouse where Germans soldiers were walking around and we could have done them quite easily," recalled Bob Francis, an SAS soldier. "But I didn't want to hurt anybody and I certainly didn't want to get hurt. The war all sort of fizzled out." Not so in Czechoslovakia, where the Nazis showed no inclination to surrender. At midday, Radio Prague called on citizens to rise up against the German occupiers, but it would be another four days before liberation.

The Red Army has a bloody fight to get into Prague, Czechoslovakia, despite an uprising in the city

ALAMY X1, GETTY IMAGES X4

6 MAY

In Reims, in northeastern France, a German delegation led by General Alfred Jodl arrived in the late afternoon to begin negotiations with General Dwight Eisenhower's senior commanders in Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force about the terms of an unconditional surrender.



Only this text in English is authoritative

ACT OF MILITARY SURRENDER

1. We the undersigned, acting by authority of the German High Command, hereby surrender unconditionally to the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force and simultaneously to the Soviet High Command all forces on land, sea, and in the air who are at this date under German control.

2. The German High Command will at once issue orders to all German military, naval and air authorities and to all forces under German control to cease active operations at 2301 hours Central European time on 8 May and to remain in the positions occupied at that time. No ship, vessel, or aircraft is to be scuttled, or any damage done to their hull, machinery or equipment.

3. The German High Command will at once issue to the appropriate commanders, and ensure the carrying out of any further orders issued by the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force and by the Soviet High Command.

4. This act of military surrender is without prejudice to, and will be superseded by any general instrument of surrender imposed by, or on behalf of the United Nations and applicable to GERMANY and the German armed forces as a whole.

- 1 -

5. In the event of the German High Command or any of the forces under their control failing to act in accordance with this Act of Surrender, the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force and the Soviet High Command will take such punitive or other action as they deem appropriate.

Signed at Rheims France at 0241 on the 7th day of May, 1945.

On behalf of the German High Command.

Jodl

IN THE PRESENCE OF

On behalf of the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force.

W. B. Smith

On behalf of the Soviet High Command.

- 2 -

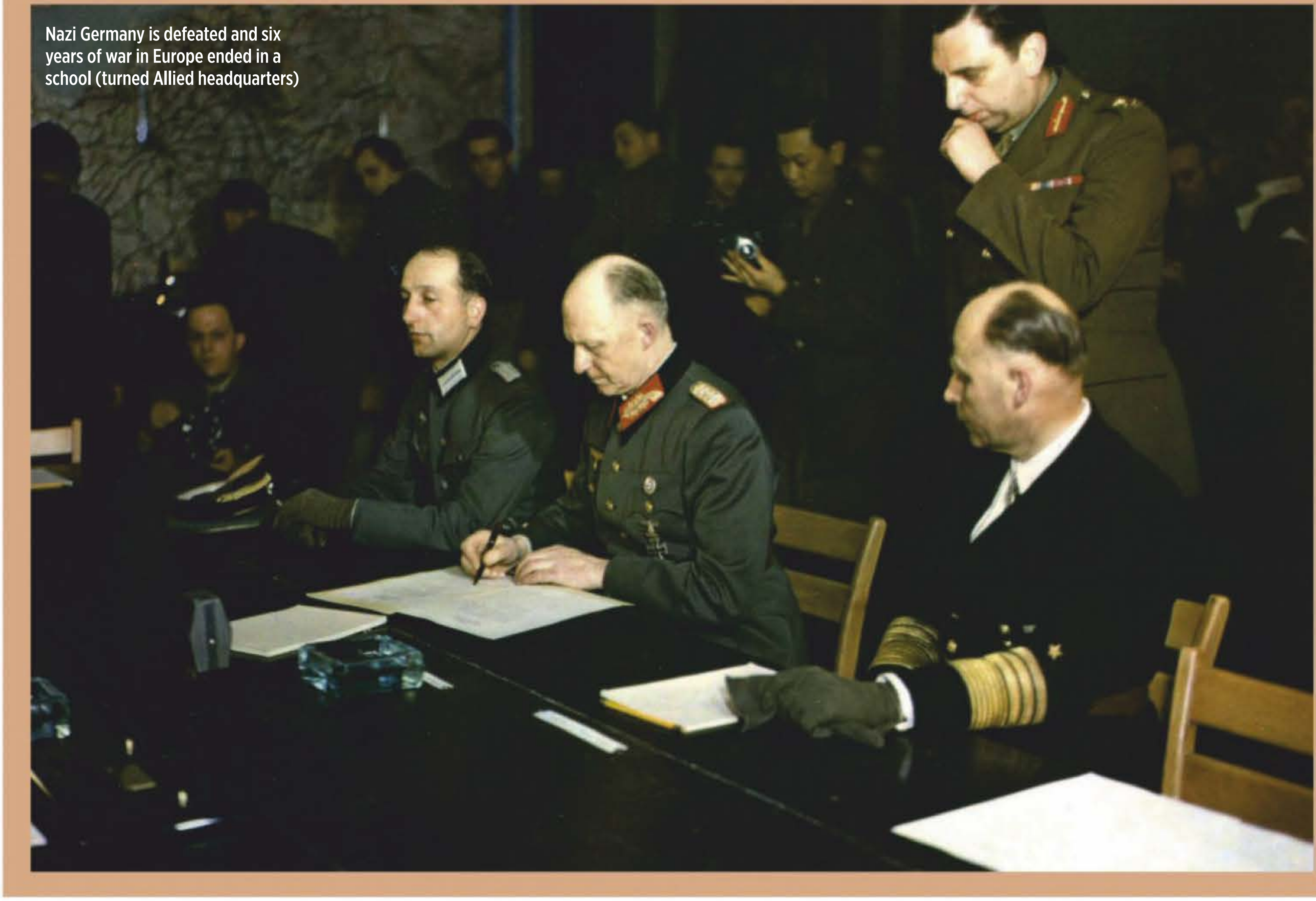
Major General, French Army
(Witness)

The full document contained 14 articles, including these two pages: the Act of Military Surrender

7 MAY

After taking instructions from Dönitz, Jodl signed the terms of surrender at 2.41am: it would take effect at one minute past midnight the next day. A beaming Eisenhower and his staff posed for the cameras, with the commander in chief holding two gold pens in a 'V for Victory' salute. The Russians angrily demanded that a second surrender document be signed in their presence in Berlin. Churchill, however, seemed strangely underwhelmed. "The PM does not seem at all excited about the end of the war," wrote his personal physician, Lord Moran, in his diary.

> **"We the undersigned, acting by authority of the German High Command, hereby surrender unconditionally"**
>
> The Act of Military Surrender



Nazi Germany is defeated and six years of war in Europe ended in a school (turned Allied headquarters)

8 MAY

There is a sense of euphoria in a packed Piccadilly Circus, with flag waving, singing and conga dancing

“Thunderstorm in the night,” wrote Vere Hodgson in her diary. “No one slept much for excitement.” Dawn brought a change in the weather and Noël Coward “went wandering through the crowds in the hot sunshine. Everyone is good humoured and cheerful”.

Yet on his way to the House of Lords, Lord Moran noted “bread queues everywhere” a reminder that while war in Europe had ended, rationing had not.

Churchill lunched at Buckingham Palace while crowds gather outside, among them a correspondent from *The Times*: “Every other woman seemed to be wearing a rosette or a ribbon in her hair, and seen from above they by no means corroborated the gloomy report that London had become a place of tired looking people wearing tired looking clothes.”

The PM returned to Downing Street and, at 3pm, addressed the nation. Neither Lord Moran nor the peer next to him thought much of the speech, describing it as “tinny”, but Coward, listening on one of the loud speakers in London, branded it “a magnificent speech, simple and without boastfulness”.

At 3.30pm, Churchill was given a rousing reception on entering the House of Commons and he in turn praised Parliament, calling it, “the strongest foundation for waging war that has ever been seen in the whole of our long history”.

There were similar scenes of jubilation in Glasgow, Cardiff and Belfast, but it was London that hosted the biggest party. So vast were the crowds that it was impossible to enter Underground stations, so people walked, cycled or improvised. “Cars passed us with people riding on the hoods and the bonnets,” wrote Hodgson of her walk down Pall Mall. “Everyone was just letting themselves go!”

By the time Churchill returned to the palace with his War Cabinet, the crowd was enormous. The king and queen, having already made one appearance alongside the two princesses with Elizabeth in her army uniform – reappeared, this time with a cigar waving Churchill, prompting “a great outburst of cheering, which continued for at least five minutes… afterwards the crowd began community singing.”

The PM’s next stop was Whitehall and, from the Ministry of Health balcony, he told the crowd below: “My dear friends, this is your hour. This is not victory of a party or of any class. It’s a victory of the great British nation as a whole.” The Royal Family, still on their balcony, were “looking enchanting” when Coward arrived in early evening. “We all roared ourselves hoarse,” he reported. “This is the greatest day in our history.”

In Vere’s flat, as in many homes, the party continued. She turned on the radio just as Churchill took a final bow at Whitehall. “Mr Churchill came out in his siren suit and conducted *Land of Hope and Glory*,” she wrote. “What a lad! He was cheered to the echo. God bless him!”

The Royal Family and Churchill on the balcony of Buckingham Palace, to the delight of the crowd below

ALAMY X1, GETTY IMAGES X3, TOPFOTO X1

THE ECSTASY OF THE ALLIES

On 8 May, the scenes of celebration witnessed in London were repeated around the world, even as the war continued against Japan

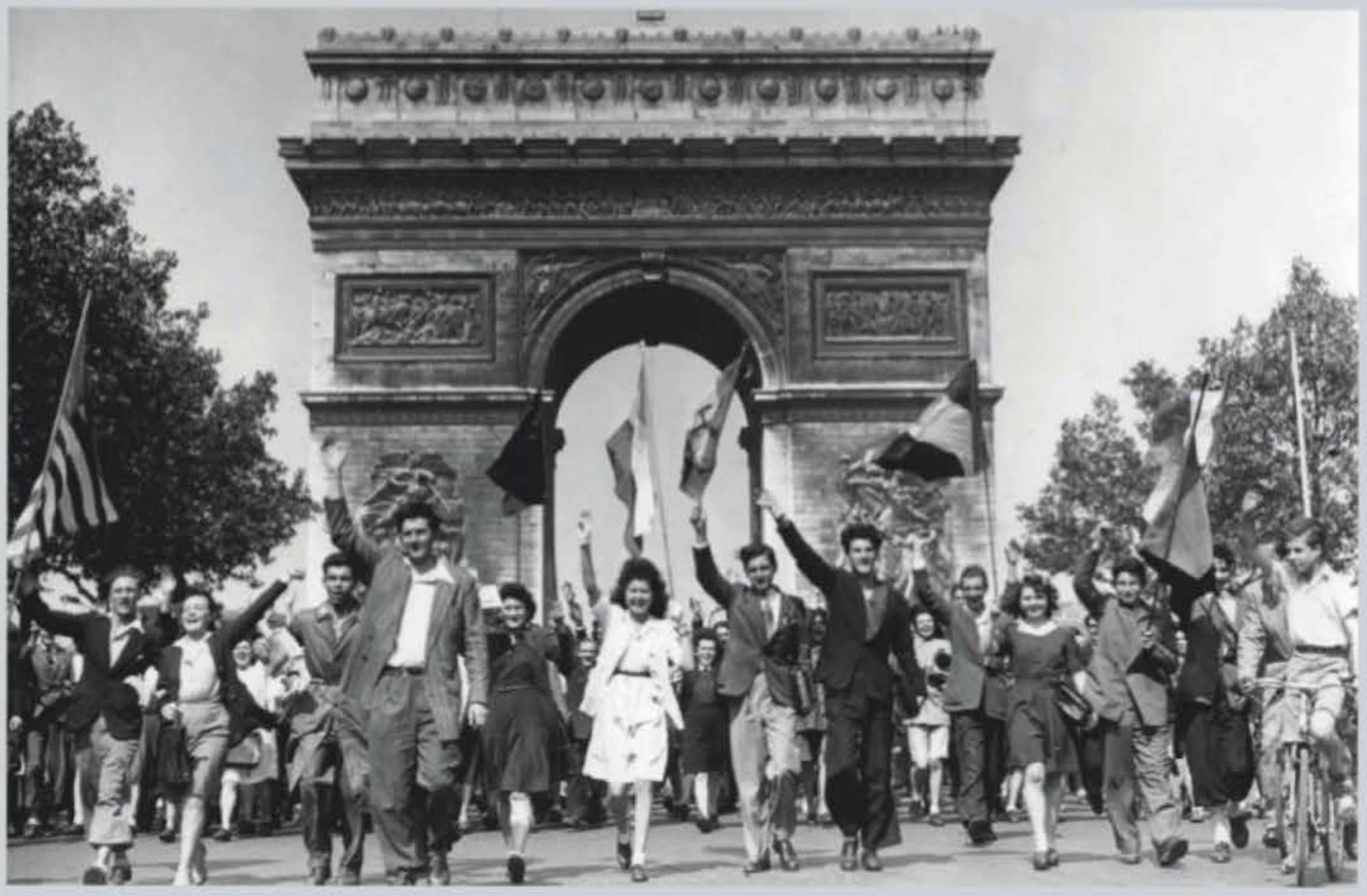
In Paris, occupied during the war, there were salvoes of artillery and an address by General Charles de Gaulle. The correspondent for *The Times* described "beflagged streets filled with cheering people" and said that the partial blackout had finally been lifted. "All public monuments are floodlit, Paris is the City of Light again."

The bells in Vatican City pealed, while in Brussels a final all-clear of the air raid *sirens sounded. In Moscow, reported the Associated Press*, "Russians swarmed through Red Square shouting 'Long Live Stalin' and 'Hurrah for Victory'."

Across the Atlantic, New Yorkers gathered en masse in Times Square, dancing, singing and throwing torn up newspapers as a storm of celebratory confetti. Yet the mayor, Fiorello La Guardia – in a more sombre mood – asked people to return to work, saying: "Remain on the job as a token of respect and support for the men dying at this very moment in the Pacific."

Australians similarly felt the burden of the ongoing war, but still celebrated. The country heard of Germany's surrender on the evening of 7 May, and, reported one newspaper, "those still in the city night clubs and theatres took up the revelry, cheering and yelling".

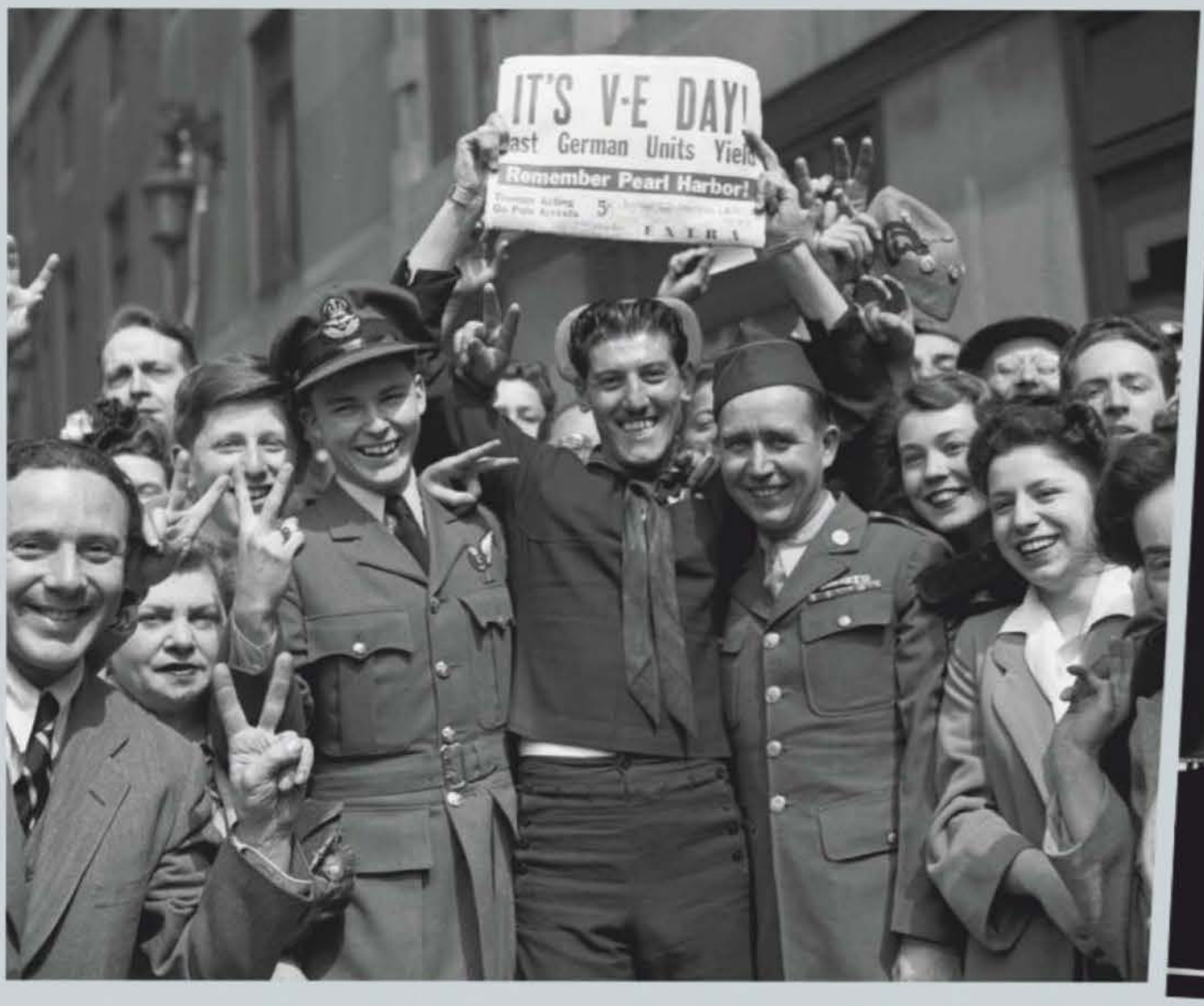
Even neutral countries saw scenes of jubilation, including in Sweden. Stockholm had a "carnival night" as exiled Danes and Norwegians danced on taxis, while in Iraq – the scene of heavy fighting in 1941 – parliament proclaimed five days of holiday to celebrate war's end.



ABOVE: **A procession down the Champs-Élysées in Paris, which had been liberated from the Nazis in August 1944**

BELOW LEFT: **Servicemen of various Allied countries and civilians celebrate victory in Europe in Times Square**

BELOW: **The Statue of Liberty is fully illuminated for the first time since the attack on Pearl Harbor**

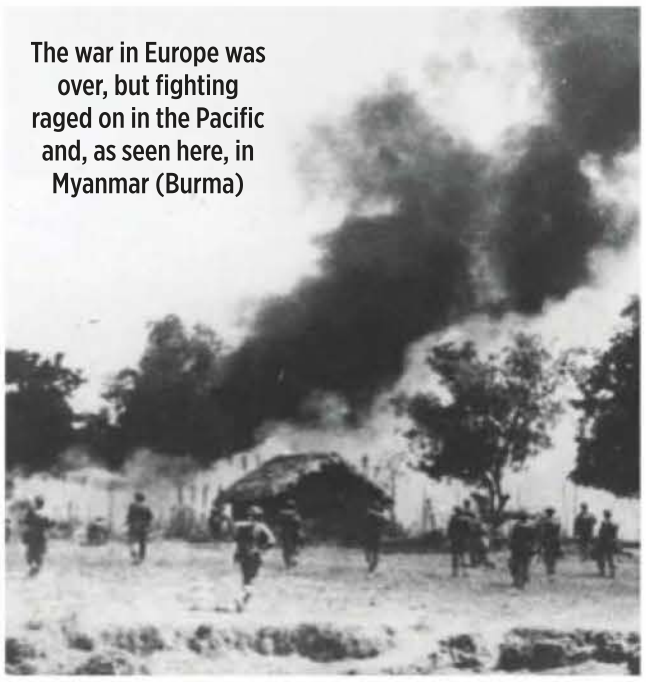


> “For US Marines in the Pacific theatre, ‘Nazi Germany might as well have been on the Moon’”
>
> Eugene Sledge, US Marine

WHAT HAPPENED NEXT...

When US Marines fighting on the Pacific island of Okinawa were told of the German surrender, the response could be summed up as ‘so what?’ One of them, Eugene Sledge, remarked: “We were resigned only to the fact that the Japanese would fight to total extinction… Nazi Germany might as well have been on the Moon.”

The British 14th Army, engaged in a similarly brutal campaign in Myanmar (Burma), echoed that sentiment in a terse communiqué on 8 May: “The war is over. Let us get on with the war.” But the war in Europe *was* over, and the most urgent challenge was how to manage the estimated 11 million people displaced by six years of conflict. It was a daunting task made all the more difficult by the rapidly deteriorating relationship between the Soviet Union and their Western allies. The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) had been formed to oversee the refugee crisis. With millions of ‘displaced persons’ needing to be resettled, a new type of battle was now underway in Europe.



The war in Europe was over, but fighting raged on in the Pacific and, as seen here, in Myanmar (Burma)

DISPLACED
PERSONS
CENTER
6

A group of Dutch ‘displaced persons’ leave a UNRRA camp, bound for home

ALAMY X1, GETTY IMAGES X2

GAVIN MORTIMER is an author and historian who specialises in World War II history

GET HOOKED

LISTEN

Hear a compilation of BBC reports from VE Day 1945 on *Witness History* on the BBC World Service.
bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02qv6cj

READ

To see more remarkable images from 1945, pick up a copy of *BBC World Histories*, on sale from 22 April

GETTY IMAGES

THE IMPOSSIBLE MYSTERY OF THE VOYNICH MANUSCRIPT

Full of fantastical drawings and written in an unknown language, the one-of-a-kind manuscript has so far bamboozled all who have tried to crack its secrets. **Spencer Mizen** tries to explain the unexplainable

We've put a man on the Moon, come up with the theory of general relativity, split the atom – the list of breakthroughs in making the impossible possible goes on and on. Humanity can achieve pretty much anything it puts its mind to, right?

Well, perhaps not *anything*. For stored away in the Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Yale University, in the US, is a book that steadfastly refuses to submit to our insatiable demand for knowledge and explanation. For decades, that same small codex – a little over 20cm by 16cm – has successfully confounded some of the world's most brilliant minds with its unreadable language. It is called the Voynich Manuscript, and the mystery swirling around its creation, its backstory and, above all, its beguiling contents surely make it one of the greatest unsolved riddles in literary history.

FLIGHTS OF FANTASY

Leaf through the 240 richly illustrated vellum pages of the manuscript and you'll soon understand why it has enticed so many people for so many years. Its pages are adorned with an array of fantastical illustrations – ones you might expect to encounter in a dream, not within the pages of a centuries-old manuscript. There are floating castles, disembodied heads, flowers that bear no relation to anything you can find on Earth, strange creatures that resemble jellyfish, and lots of naked women bathing in water.

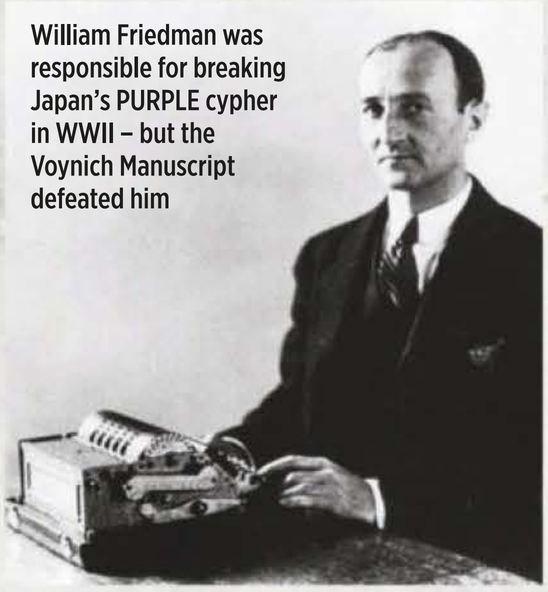
The Voynich Manuscript is stored at the Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Yale – along with countless other literary marvels

> "Brilliant cryptologists including Alan Turing were left stumped"

Yet it's the text that has proved most puzzling to the great and the good of the academic world. Written in an unknown script with an alphabet that appears nowhere else other than in the pages of this manuscript, it has thus far proved utterly indecipherable. Brilliant wartime cryptologists including Alan Turing, FBI operatives (apparently fearing the text may contain communist propaganda), respected medievalists, mathematic and scientific scholars, skilled linguists… they've all been left stumped by the Voynich Manuscript. The gifted William Friedman – chief cryptoanalyst in the US Army's Signal Intelligence Service – spent 30 years trying to crack the secrets, without success.

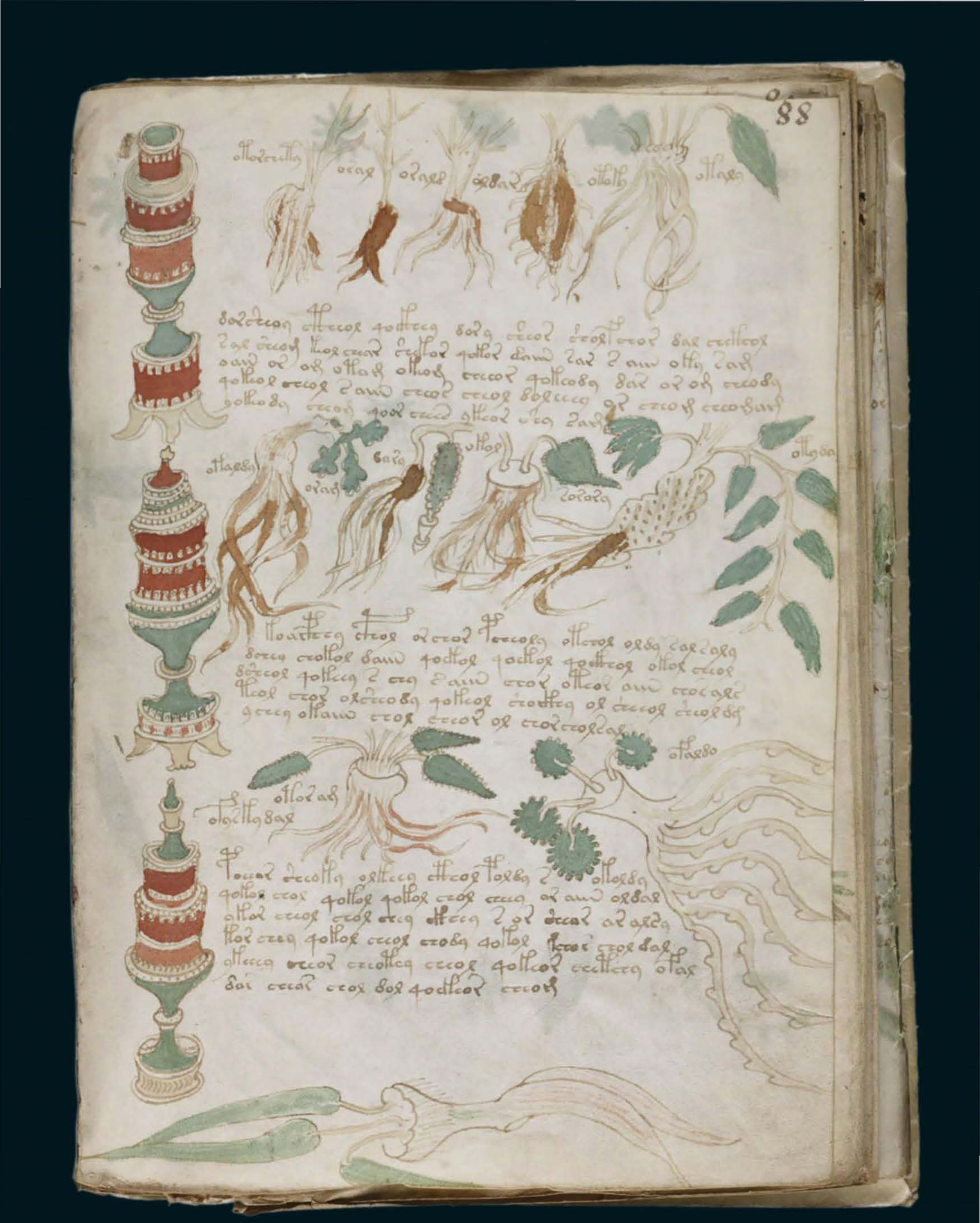
At the heart of this wordy whodunnit was a Polish-Lithuanian book dealer with revolutionary tendencies and famous friends: a man called Wilfrid Voynich. To say that he led a colourful life is something of an understatement. Born in what is now Lithuania in 1865, he got himself arrested for his socialist activities and imprisoned in Siberia, only to escape and make his way to London. There, he established a second-hand book shop that was patronised by the man who would become Sydney Reilly,

▶

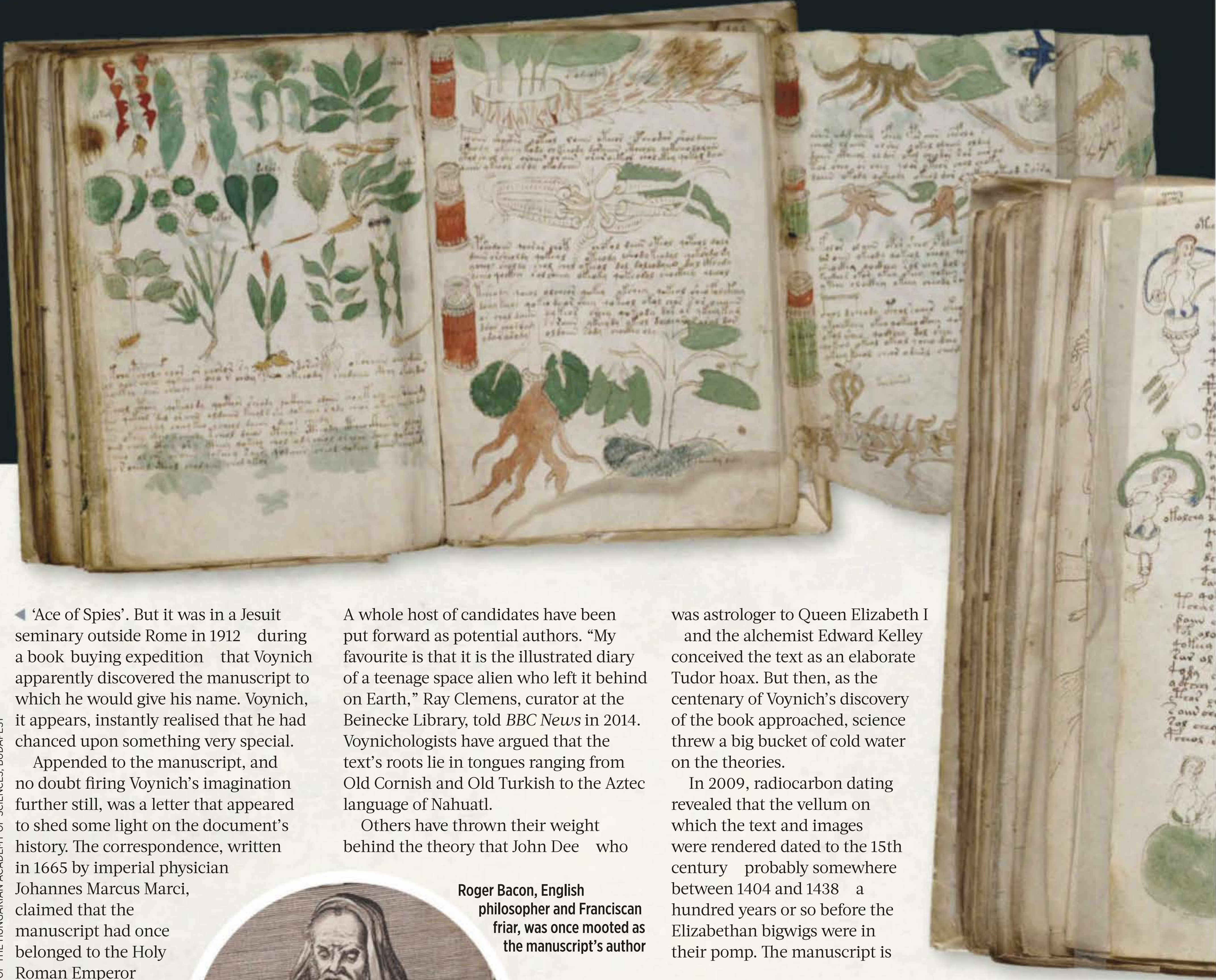

William Friedman was responsible for breaking Japan's PURPLE cypher in WWII – but the Voynich Manuscript defeated him

Wilfrid Voynich arrived in London as a revolutionary, becoming a bookseller when he 'retired' from that life in the late 1890s

ALAMY X4

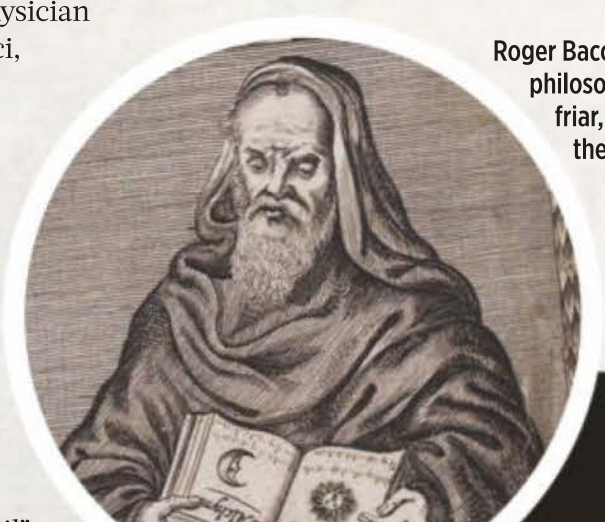


The repetition of certain words next to the same pictures has led some to believe that the text may be a dead language



◄ 'Ace of Spies'. But it was in a Jesuit seminary outside Rome in 1912 during a book buying expedition that Voynich apparently discovered the manuscript to which he would give his name. Voynich, it appears, instantly realised that he had chanced upon something very special.

Appended to the manuscript, and no doubt firing Voynich's imagination further still, was a letter that appeared to shed some light on the document's history. The correspondence, written in 1665 by imperial physician Johannes Marcus Marci, claimed that the manuscript had once belonged to the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II, who reigned from 1576 to 1612. Its next owner was apparently a Prague based alchemist called Georg Baresch who, Marci tells us, "devoted unflagging toil" to the quest of deciphering the text and "relinquished hope only with his life". The book then came into the possession of Marci himself, who sent it on to a Jesuit scholar called Athanasius Kircher in the hope that he could succeed where Baresch had failed.



Roger Bacon, English philosopher and Franciscan friar, was once mooted as the manuscript's author

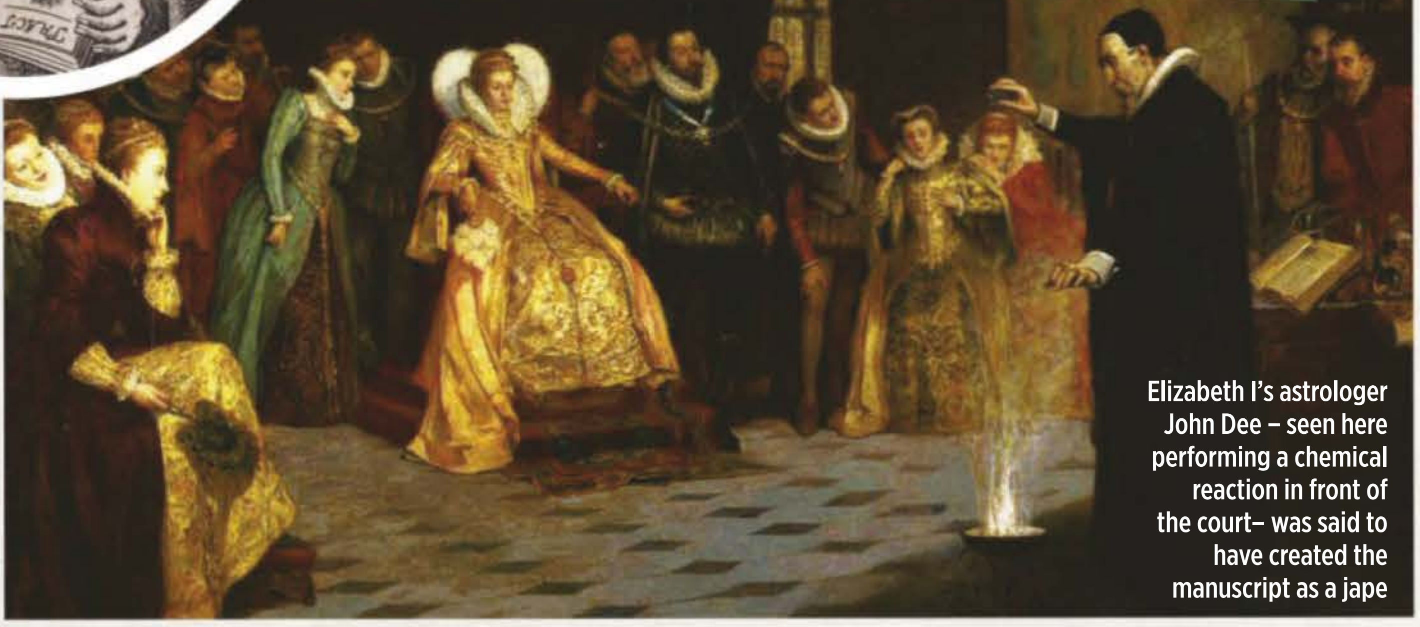
SEARCH FOR THE SCRIBE

Marci's missive tells us the manuscript could have been the handiwork of the 13th century philosopher and alchemist Roger Bacon. Voynich himself called his discovery the "Roger Bacon cypher manuscript". Case closed? Certainly not. A whole host of candidates have been put forward as potential authors. "My favourite is that it is the illustrated diary of a teenage space alien who left it behind on Earth," Ray Clemens, curator at the Beinecke Library, told *BBC News* in 2014. Voynichologists have argued that the text's roots lie in tongues ranging from Old Cornish and Old Turkish to the Aztec language of Nahuatl.

Others have thrown their weight behind the theory that John Dee who was astrologer to Queen Elizabeth I and the alchemist Edward Kelley conceived the text as an elaborate Tudor hoax. But then, as the centenary of Voynich's discovery of the book approached, science threw a big bucket of cold water on the theories.

In 2009, radiocarbon dating revealed that the vellum on which the text and images were rendered dated to the 15th century probably somewhere between 1404 and 1438 a hundred years or so before the Elizabethan bigwigs were in their pomp. The manuscript is

"It's claimed the manuscript once belonged to Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II"

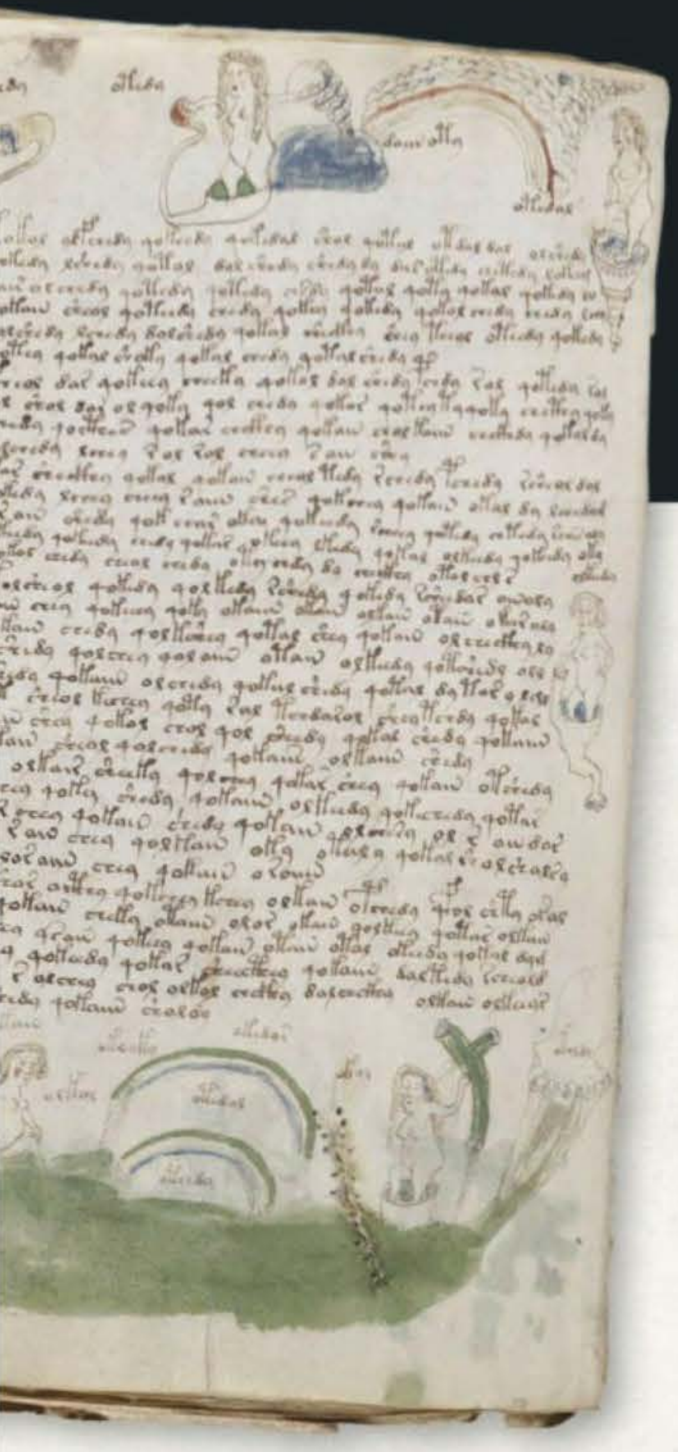


Elizabeth I's astrologer John Dee – seen here performing a chemical reaction in front of the court– was said to have created the manuscript as a jape

ALAMY X3, GETTY IMAGES X2, ROHONC CODEX/K 114/FOLS: 41 & 51/THE LIBRARY AND INFORMATION CENTRE OF THE HUNGARIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, BUDAPEST

LEFT: **The strange plants that adorn the pages of the manuscript bear no semblance to any known to science**

BELOW: **Depictions of bathing women led one researcher to label it a women's 'health guide'**



then, it seems, a medieval mystery, not a Tudor one.

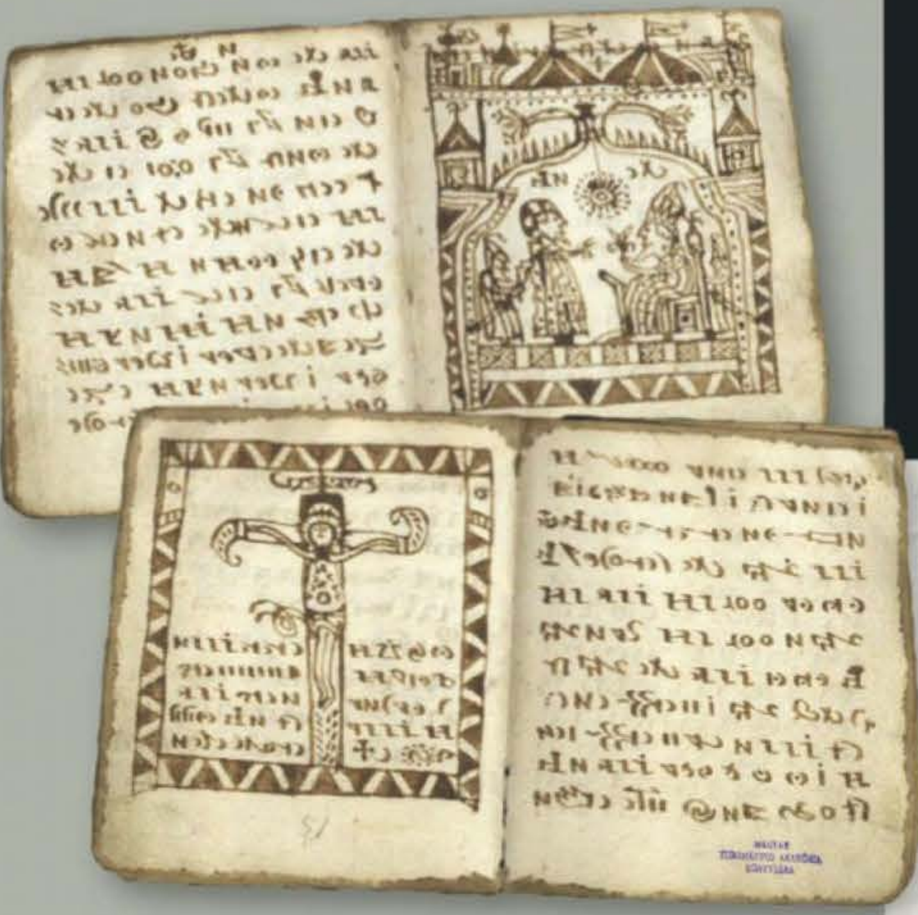
If Voynichologists believed that the radiocarbon dating would somehow becalm the arguments raging over the provenance of the book, they were to be mistaken. In 2017, historical researcher Nicholas Gibbs provoked something of a backlash when he declared that the manuscript was a women's health guide or, as he put it, "A reference book of selected remedies lifted from the standard treatises of the medieval period, an instruction manual for the health and wellbeing of the more well to do women in society."

Gibbs based his argument on the images of bathing women and the repeated use of signs of the Zodiac, both of which were regularly employed in medical treatises in medieval Europe. While he expounded his theory in the much respected *Times Literary* ▶

MISSION IMPOSSIBLE: THREE MORE INDECIPHERABLE TEXTS

The Voynich Manuscript is not the only historical text to have perplexed would-be codebreakers

THE ROHONC CODEX



▶ Sometime in the early 19th century, a book was discovered in Hungary written by an unknown author, for an unknown reason, at an unknown date, in a language that no one can understand. That book is the Rohonc Codex, and though it's not as celebrated as the Voynich Manuscript, its origins are every bit as murky.

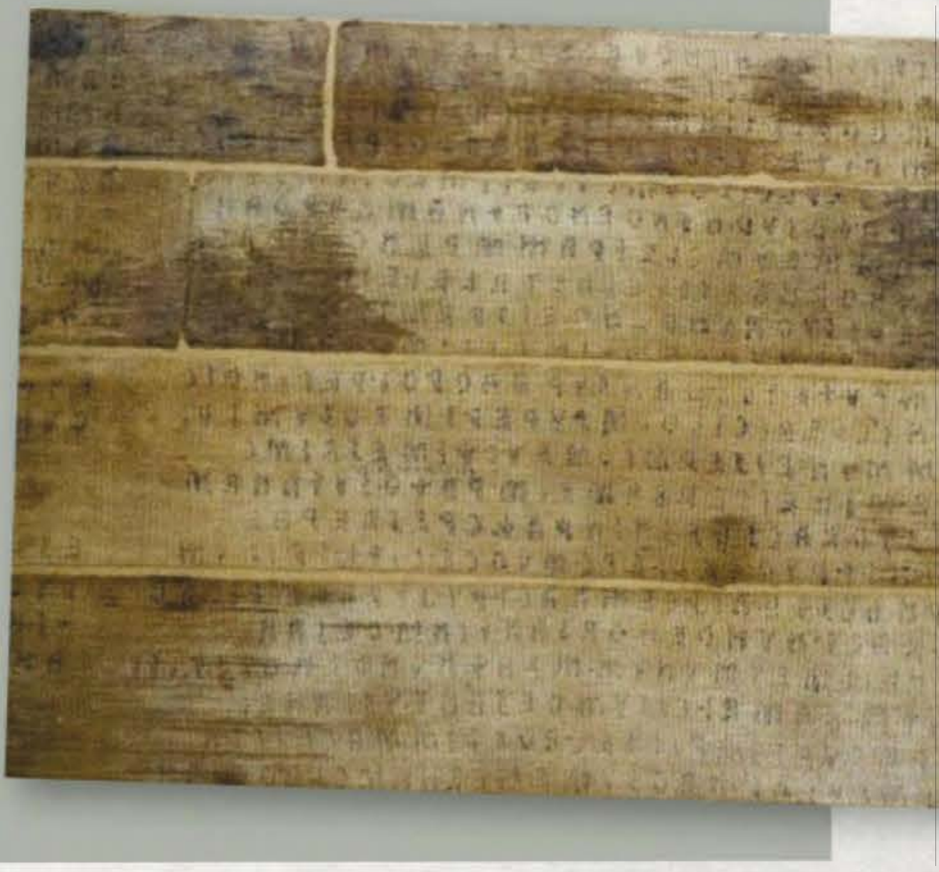
Here's what we know: across its 448 pages, the codex contains hundreds of distinctive characters (perhaps as many as 792), symbols similar to those painted onto cave walls occupied by Scythian monks, and drawings that contain what could be Christian, Muslim and Hindu symbols. It's been theorised that the text is written in a form of Hungarian, early Romanian, or even Hindi. The rest is mystery.

THE BOOK OF SOYGA

While it's now widely accepted that John Dee didn't write the Voynich Manuscript, the Elizabethan astrologer's connection to the Book of Soyga – a treatise on magic, astrology and demonology – is undeniable. Dee acquired the book in the early 1580s and was enchanted by its combination of protection spells and magical formulas. He was even more fascinated by its final 36 pages, which were written in code, and that's where things got really weird.

In a bid to crack the meaning of the text, Dee and his friend, alchemist and occultist Edward Kelley, apparently summoned the archangel Uriel in order to question him. We can't be sure what advice Uriel offered, but we do know that versions of the manuscript now reside in the Bodleian and British libraries.

THE LIBER LINTEUS



▶ Not all mysterious texts are found in books – the Liber Linteus is an Egyptian mummy literally wrapped in an enigma. In 1867, German Egyptologist Heinrich Brugsch was examining a mummy, purchased in Alexandria a few years earlier, when he discovered writing on the linen in which the body was wrapped. That text would be sent to Vienna, Austria, in 1891 for examination, where it was discovered that it was written in the little-understood language of the Etruscans, an ancient civilisation on the Italian peninsula.

Based on the dates and names contained in the writing, it's now thought that the text was some kind of religious calendar. Though what that calendar was doing wrapped around a dead woman far from the Etruscans' homeland has thus far defied explanation.

ABOVE LEFT & RIGHT: **The illustrations in the Voynich Manuscript are wondrous, but their meaning has left scholars confused and divided**

ALAMY X2

◀ *Supplement*, that didn't guarantee it a rapturous reception. "Frankly, I'm a little surprised the *TLS* published it," said Lisa Fagin Davis, executive director of the Medieval Academy of America shortly after. "If they had sent it to the Beinecke Library, they would have rebutted it in a heartbeat."

In May 2019, the Voynich Manuscript was propelled back into the headlines once again, when an academic made the explosive claim that he had succeeded where everyone else had failed and successfully decoded the mysterious text. "I experienced a series of 'Eureka' moments whilst deciphering the code," said University of Bristol honorary research associate Dr Gerard Cheshire, "followed by a sense of disbelief and excitement."

CODE OR LOST LANGUAGE?

These 'Eureka' moments led Cheshire to the conclusion that the manuscript was a "compendium of information on herbal remedies, therapeutic bathing and astrological readings", compiled by Dominican nuns as a source of reference for Maria of Castile, Queen of Aragon great aunt to Catherine of Aragon. Cheshire declared that the text was written in the first half of the 15th century in a now lost language called proto Romance.

Cheshire is certainly not the only academic to argue that the Voynich Manuscript was written in what was once a living, spoken language as opposed to consisting of code, or meaningless gobbledegook. It has, many argue, all the characteristics of a real tongue with, for example, certain words only appearing besides certain illustrations.

> **"Many argue the text has the characteristics of a real tongue"**

This didn't save Cheshire's theory from facing a rebuttal every bit as fierce as the one directed at Nicholas Gibbs, however. Fagin Davis once more led the charge, denouncing Cheshire's paper as "just more aspirational, circular, self fulfilling nonsense".

Another would be solution to the riddle had, it seemed, bitten the dust. With the text continuing to confound academics, with so many dead-ends reached, do we simply have to accept that the Voynich Manuscript will never give up its secrets? Or could the solution to this mystery be hiding in plain sight in the shape of the man after whom it is named?

For decades, a theory has done the rounds that this medieval manuscript wasn't medieval at all, but a 20th century forgery conceived and implemented to brilliant effect by none other than Wilfrid Voynich himself.

But, hang on, you may be thinking: what about the radiocarbon dating that pinned the manuscript to the early to mid 1400s? Well, the vellum does indeed date to that time. But there are rumours that Voynich had acquired a large supply of vellum and then replicated the medieval inks and pigments that adorn that vellum himself.

Forgery, or genuine work of medieval literature? The home of a lost language, or repository of pages of meaningless babble? One thing is for certain: the Voynich Manuscript is the mystery that keeps on giving. And if the past few years of intrigue, claim, counter claim and denial is anything to go by, all the signs are that it will keep on giving for some time yet. ⊙

GET HOOKED

READ

Scroll through an online version of the entire Voynich Manuscript at *archive.org/details/TheVoynichManuscript*

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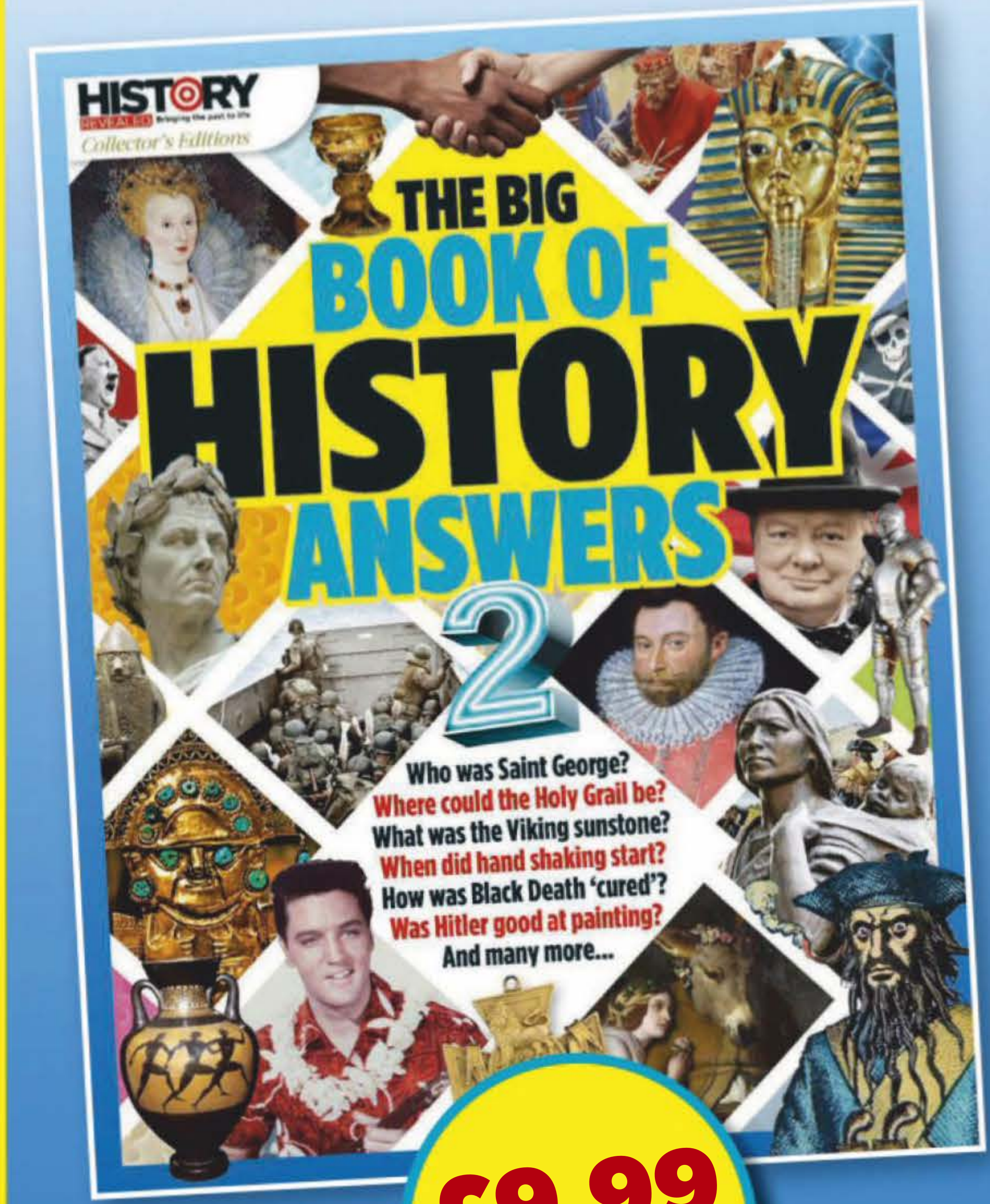
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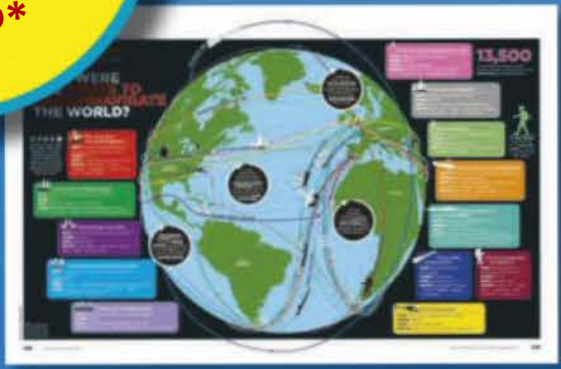

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WHAT IF... ALEXANDER THE GREAT HAD KEPT CONQUERING?

Jonny Wilkes talks to **Prof Paul Cartledge** about whether an older Alexander the Great could have achieved an even bigger empire or even more impressive reputation

Few rulers throughout history, if any, can compare to Alexander the Great in terms of his military mind, warrior leadership and campaign of conquest. The King of Macedon built an empire that stretched from Greece and Egypt to the Indian subcontinent, and forever changed the ancient world by ushering in a new Hellenistic epoch of Greek culture and influence. And all by the time of his death at the age of just 32, which causes one to wonder what Alexander could have done if he had kept going or lived longer.

Alexander reached as far as the Punjab (modern-day Pakistan and northwestern India) less than a decade after launching a brutally successful invasion of the Persian Empire in 334 BC. There, his army, which had not once tasted defeat, faced its sternest test against the well armed men and war elephants of King Porus of the Indian kingdom of Paurava. They won the Battle of the Hydaspes at a cost including a personal one for Alexander as he lost his beloved horse, Bucephalas but he chose to march on.

"Alexander had the impression that he was within striking distance of 'Ocean', the great river imagined as encircling the 'oikoumene', or inhabited cosmos," says Paul Cartledge, Emeritus A G Leventis Professor of Greek Culture at the University of Cambridge. "His teacher as a boy, Aristotle, had failed to tell him about China as he didn't know himself."

Had Alexander pushed on eastwards, he would have come up against the Chinese in their 'Warring States Period' and so quickly met the powerful Qin State, which a century later would unify all China. Yet it was unlikely that he would have reached China anyway, says Cartledge. After years of campaigning in unknown lands far from home, his men refused to go any further.

"Alexander tried everything: threats, shaming, promises, self-flagellation, feigned or genuine illness. If even that combination, reliant on his aura, didn't do the trick, clearly there was to be no going on," says Cartledge. "But he does seem to have taken revenge: he had no need to return to Persia via modern Baluchistan along the Persian Gulf, where fighting and disease caused the unnecessary deaths of thousands of his own troops."

DID YOU KNOW?

EGO WHERE HE GOES

As his army swept across Egypt, Persia and farther east, Alexander celebrated by founding as many as 70 towns and cities, more than a dozen of which he named after himself. He even named one, Bucephala, after his horse Bucephalas.

ARABIAN FIGHTS

Alexander returned to Babylon, where he died in 323 BC. Had he lived, he almost certainly would have set about securing his conquests while preparing for another invasion, this time to Arabia.

"He wasn't absolutely the world's greatest administrator, rather a better conqueror," says Cartledge, but the establishment of his empire utterly relied on effective administration, as adding further territories would stretch his resources and armies too thin to control.

Alexander seemed to prefer a wholesale reliance on elites from the captured regions, as opposed to Macedonians or other Greeks, to act as *satraps* (provincial governors or viceroys) and for chief military officers.

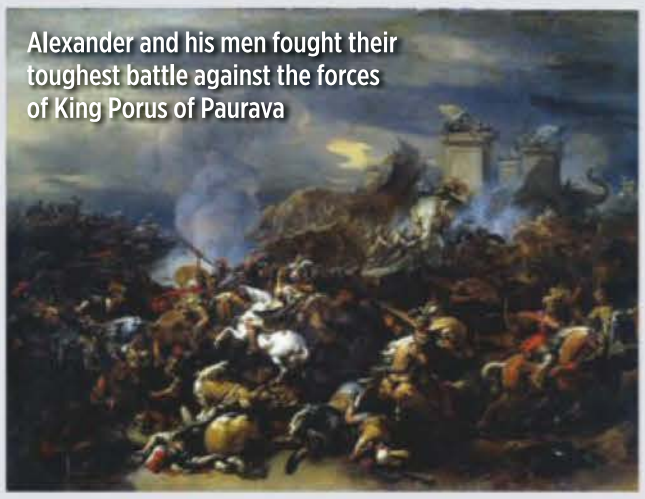
"He had seen the wisdom of devolving some local government. Immediately after the Hydaspes battle, Alexander gave back to defeated Porus his own territory, and indeed added more," says Cartledge, which meant maintaining a strong presence in the region via a proxy.

"Chandragupta Maurya then founded the Mauryan kingdom in 321 BC, something Alexander would not just have tolerated, but actively encouraged. In other words, Alexander would have anticipated, in miniature, the Roman Empire's system of 'client kings' –

IN CONTEXT

Alexander III came to the throne in 336 BC at the age of 20. His father, Philip II, had transformed the peripheral state of Macedon into the dominant power in Greece, and had planned to invade the Persian Empire. Alexander took that ambition up himself, crossing the Hellespont with more than 30,000 infantry soldiers and 7,000 cavalry. Crushing the Persians at every battle, Alexander became the most powerful man in the ancient world.

His decade-long campaign only came to an end, in the Punjab, when his exhausted and demoralised army demanded they return home. Alexander acquiesced, but his spirit was broken as he gave in to drinking and megalomania. Back in Babylon, he fell ill and died in 323 BC, aged 32. Alexander's empire, which covered more than two million square miles, did not survive much longer, but it did lay the foundations of a Hellenistic world where Greek culture, language and thought spread from Europe to Asia.



Alexander and his men fought their toughest battle against the forces of King Porus of Paurava

ILLUSTRATION: SUE GENT, GETY IMAGES X1

subordinate, but largely independent local or native rulers operating at the fringe of the empire."

While this would have made the day-to-day control of Alexander's empire easier, the incorporation of foreigners into his administrative and military structures caused much resentment among Macedonians. Alexander tended towards ruthless punishments in order to impose his will. "However, his poor handling of his childhood pal Harpalus – whom he first appointed as treasurer of the entire empire, then sacked, then reappointed, and who then ran off to Greece with masses of imperial treasure – suggests Alexander wouldn't have been above pernicious cronyism."

With his empire governed by appointees and client kingdoms, Alexander would have been able to focus on expansion. His wish to head deeper east may have been stamped out, but there were many more targets for his ambition. After Arabia, he could turn west. "Not to Rome," asserts Cartledge, though. "Until 265 BC, Rome was still struggling to master its own backyard, and even then the Romans didn't get all of Italy under their thumb until well into the first century BC."

A more tempting proposition for Alexander would have been Carthage, on the northern coast of Africa. Cartledge says: "The Athenians had already thought of taking them on in the late 5th century BC, and Dionysius I of Greek Syracuse (405-367 BC), did succeed in ejecting the Carthaginians from Sicily. Alexander might well have fancied his chances."

When his appetite for conquering was sated, if it could be at all, the matter of succession would be of paramount importance. Could the empire survive without the aura of Alexander? Cartledge is unsure: "I think the empire would have broken or been stolen away regardless of how long Alexander had lived. But had he lived long enough to make quite clear who was to succeed him, and prepared that person to assume the succession, then Alexander would have pre-empted the pretty much immediate post-mortem outbreak of the wars of his successors." ⊙

"CARTHAGE, ON THE NORTHEASTERN COAST OF AFRICA, WOULD HAVE BEEN A TEMPTING PROPOSITION FOR ALEXANDER"

PROF PAUL CARTLEDGE is Emeritus A G Leventis Professor of Greek Culture and Senior Research Fellow at Clare College, Cambridge

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BBC RADIO 4 Melvyn Bragg and guests discuss Alexander the Great in an episode of *In Our Time* on BBC Radio 4.
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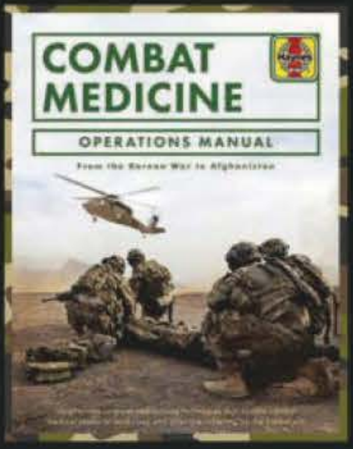
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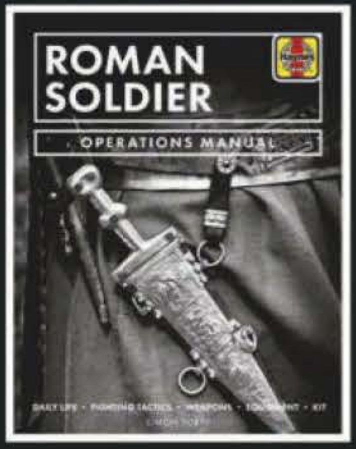
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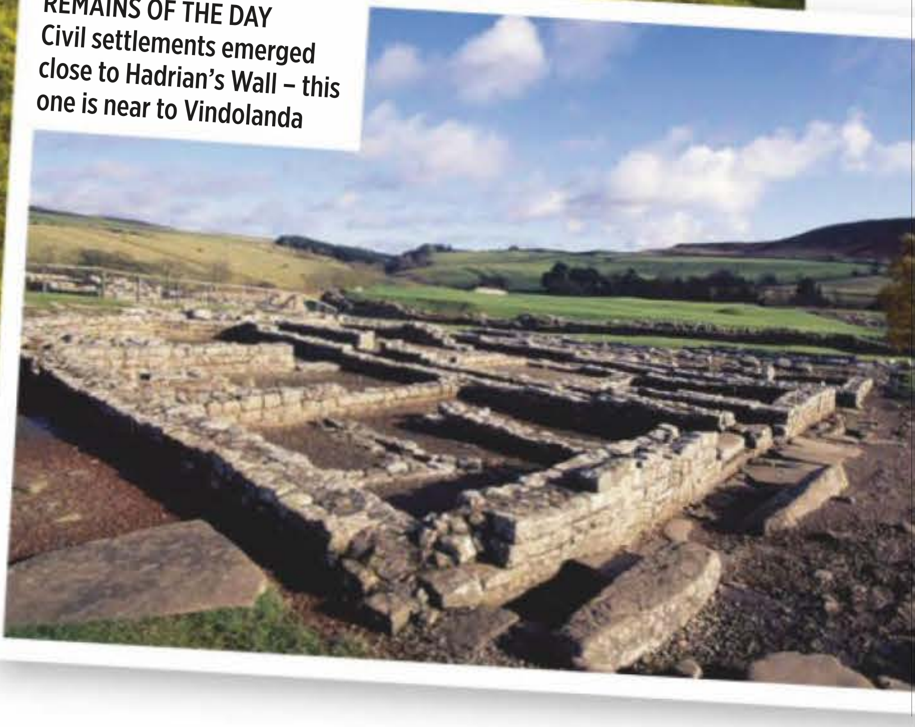
2,490

The approximate number of years between the completion of the Great Pyramid of Giza and the birth of Cleopatra.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH
Much of Hadrian's Wall has been lost to time, but impressive stretches still stand in its middle reaches



REMAINS OF THE DAY
Civil settlements emerged close to Hadrian's Wall – this one is near to Vindolanda

What was life like at Hadrian's Wall?

SHORT ANSWER Despite the threat of attack at the edge of the Roman Empire, life at the wall could be tedious

LONG ANSWER If you were a Roman soldier garrisoned on Hadrian's Wall and looking out to the wild north of Britain, you might be forgiven for thinking you were standing as far from civilisation as you could get. To be stationed on Hadrian's Wall, which stretched from coast to coast, meant living at the very edge of the empire, constantly on the front line where the threat of attack from 'barbarians' loomed.

The forts and milecastles of Hadrian's Wall tended to be garrisoned by auxiliary troops, who were not as well equipped or trained as the Roman legions. They had come from conquered territories across the empire, and among them were Syrians and Dacians (from modern-day Romania) to Spaniards and Gauls (France).

Life could be monotonous and the weather harsh, but the development of civilian settlements near the wall did offer social pursuits and entertainment. These *vici* may have been regarded as oases of Roman culture and sophistication in untamed Britain. Letters have been discovered suggesting friendships did form between soldiers at different forts and vici along the wall, or between the soldiers' wives. As the years passed, soldiers became more assimilated into British culture and formed families in the thriving communities, like the one near the Vindolanda fort in Northumberland.

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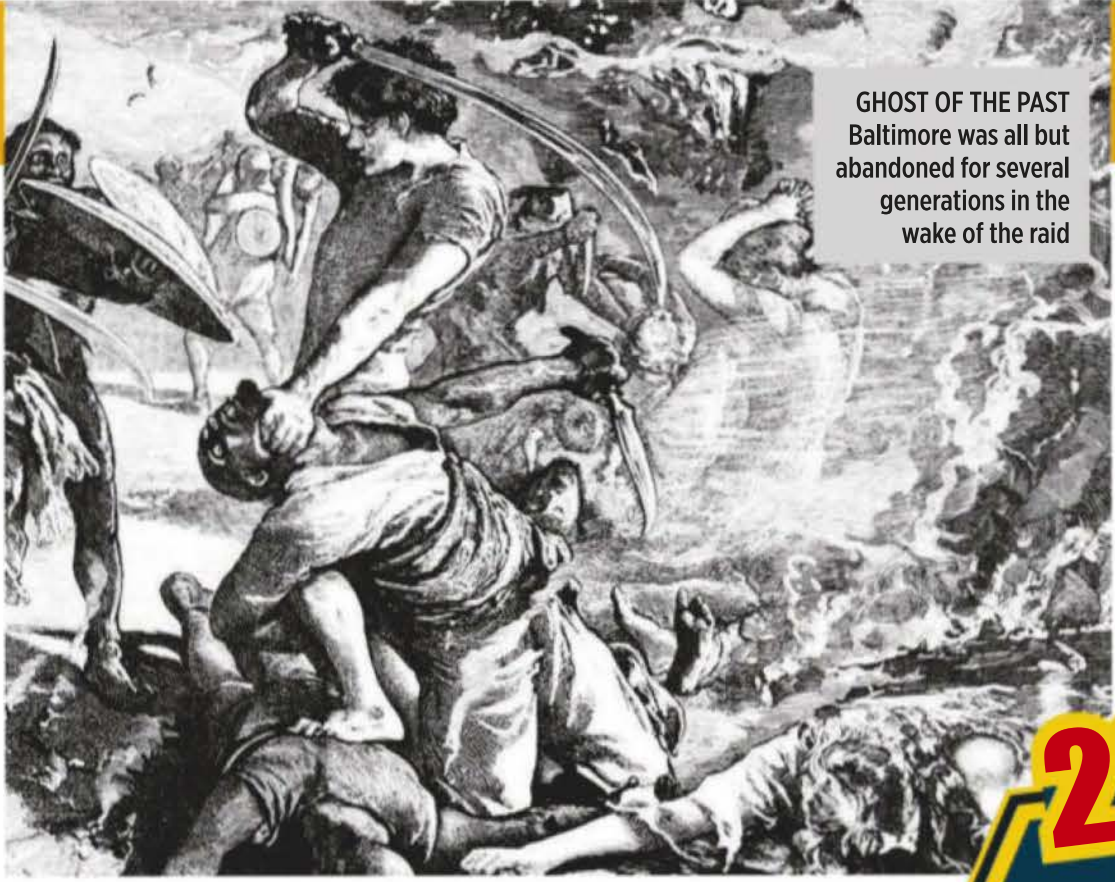


GHOST OF THE PAST Baltimore was all but abandoned for several generations in the wake of the raid

What was the Sack of Baltimore?

SHORT ANSWER In 1631, a small Irish village suffered a devastating attack by slavers and pirates

LONG ANSWER Snatched from their homes by pirates, hauled away on ships bound for a far off land and sold into a life of slavery. This could be describing the Atlantic slave trade or what befell the villagers of Baltimore, at almost the southernmost tip of Ireland, on 20 June 1631.

Dutch renegade captain Jan Janszoon van Haarlem, otherwise known as Murat Reis the Younger, led the band of North African Barbary pirates, Dutchmen and Ottoman Turks, believing the Irish coast would provide easy pickings in the form of slaves to work on galleys, as labourers or in harems. They attacked before dawn and captured more than 100 villagers.

The raid, the worst by Barbary corsairs on Ireland and Britain, inspired a famous poem by Thomas Davis, *The Sack of Baltimore*. It also spawned a number of conspiracy theories, one of which claimed that a local landowner actually planned the attack so he could seize the land.

22

The age of the budding English naturalist Charles Darwin when he joined the surveying expedition of HMS *Beagle* in 1831.

How did Isle of Dogs get its name?

SHORT ANSWER There are several theories so it's hard not to know we're barking up the wrong bush

LONG ANSWER From marshland to the financial centre of London, the Isle of Dogs has seen dramatic changes since the 17th century. Plus, it picked up a new name, although no one knows why.

The change from Stepney Marsh has been attributed to the high number of dead dogs washing up from the Thames at the spot, or the erroneous claim that it was where royal hunting dogs were kennelled.

It's more likely to have nothing to do with dogs, but be a corruption of 'ducks' (it used to be marshland after all), 'dykes' (referring to the river embankments), or 'doggers' (a type of fishing boat used by Dutch traders). We may never know... well, this answer has gone to the dogs, hasn't it?

DOG EAT DOG WORLD The Isle of Dogs is a far cry from a boggy backwater these days – it's now home to one of the UK's main financial districts

GREASED LIGHTNING
Ederle became a trendsetter, with the following four swimmers to cross the Channel all being women

Who was the first woman to swim the Channel?

SHORT ANSWER Not only did Gertrude Ederle complete the swim, but she smashed records

LONG ANSWER Several women had tried and failed to swim across the English Channel in the early 20th century, leading many men to assert publicly that the feat was beyond female physical limits. Tell that to American swimming speedster, Olympic medallist and self-proclaimed 'water baby' Gertrude Ederle.

At 7.08am on 6 August 1926, 20-year-old 'Trudy' waded into the waters at Cape Gris-Nez, France, wearing a costume she had made herself, motorcycle goggles, and smothered in grease to keep her warm.

The swim should have been 21 miles, but Ederle went off course and ended up completing nearer 35 miles, during which she was bruised by waves, stung by jellyfish and suffered her tongue swelling from the saltwater. But it didn't seem to matter. An exhausted Ederle front-crawled her way to Kingsdown, Kent, in 14 hours and 31 minutes, smashing the records set by the five men who came before her. She returned to the US a hero and an inspiration.

ALAMY X1, GETTY IMAGES X4

SNUFFED OUT... FOR NOW
The Olympic Torch arrived in Japan on 20 March; the Games were postponed just four days later

Have the Olympics ever been cancelled?

SHORT ANSWER Tokyo 2020 won't happen until 2021 at the earliest, but there are three other Games that have not taken place outright

LONG ANSWER Covid 19 has thrown the 2020 sporting calendar (and a lot else) into complete disarray, with the Summer Olympic Games in Tokyo recently postponed until 2021 at the earliest. But it's not the first time the Games have been postponed, or even cancelled. Since sprinting into life in 1896 the modern Olympics has been cancelled three times, all on account of a world war.

Organisers of the 1916 games in Berlin eventually had to accept the war would not be 'over by Christmas' before cancelling. The next time Berlin had a chance to host, 20 years later in 1936 under the looming presence of Adolf Hitler, would be the last for a while. During World War II, the Olympics in 1940 and 1944 were shelved... twice, since summer and winter games used to take place in the same year.

That said, 1944 did witness an Olympics of sorts. Polish prisoners of war in Oflag II C camp convinced their German captors to let them host an honorary games. They even made a flag of the Olympic rings out of a bedsheet and coloured scarves.

Prisoners competed in sports including football, handball and volleyball, as well as track and field events, but also painting, sculpture and music. The Germans forbade fencing, archery, javelin and pole vault, however, for obvious reasons.

DID YOU KNOW?

WORTH YOUR WEIGHT

Contemporary chronicles say that after Harold Godwinson died at the Battle of Hastings, his mother Gytha offered to give William the Conqueror his son's weight in solid gold for the return of Harold's body. William turned her down.

AMERICAN PASTIME?

Maryland became the first US state to adopt an official sport. In 1962, it eschewed more typical pastimes like baseball in favour of one that had been popular in the eastern States since colonial times: jousting.

QUEEN'S HANDIWORK

In 1545, Katherine Parr, sixth and final wife of Henry VIII, became the first woman to publish a book in England in the English language under her own name. It was a devotional work titled *Prayers or Meditations*.

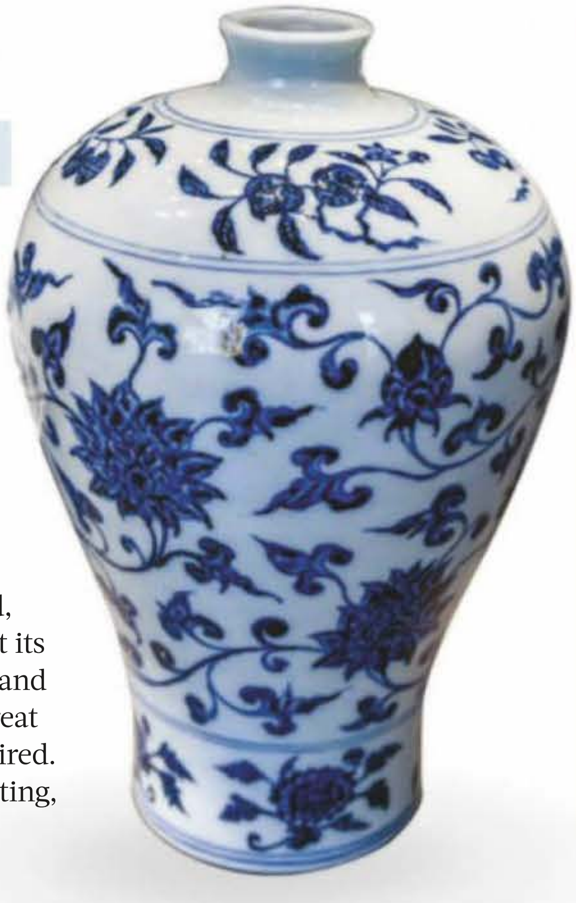
MAKING MEW-SIC

The 17th-century German scholar Athanasius Kircher designed, but never built, a musical instrument using cats. The *katzenklavier* looked like a piano, except pressing a key sent a nail into the prone tail of one of the caged cats to make them mew.

Why is Ming the best-known Chinese dynasty?

SHORT ANSWER The 276-year dynasty was a time of political, cultural, architectural and artistic marvels in China

LONG ANSWER Thank the vases, in part. The Ming Dynasty of 1368 to 1644 saw substantial advances in China starting with the fact it was a native Chinese dynasty since founder Zhu Yuanzhang had kicked out the Mongols. Chinese influence on politics, trade and culture grew not only in Asia but beyond, and within the country the Ming Dynasty left its mark. The Forbidden City, Temple of Heaven and Yu Garden all date from this time, and the Great Wall was significantly strengthened and repaired. It was also a fecund artistic period, with printing, plays and porcelain becoming Ming icons.

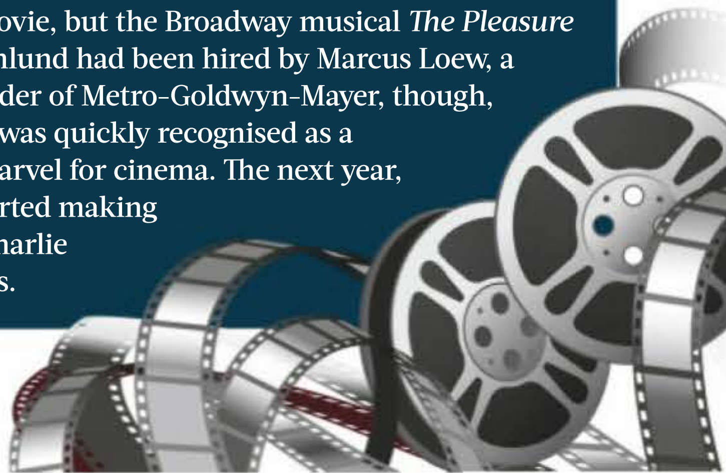


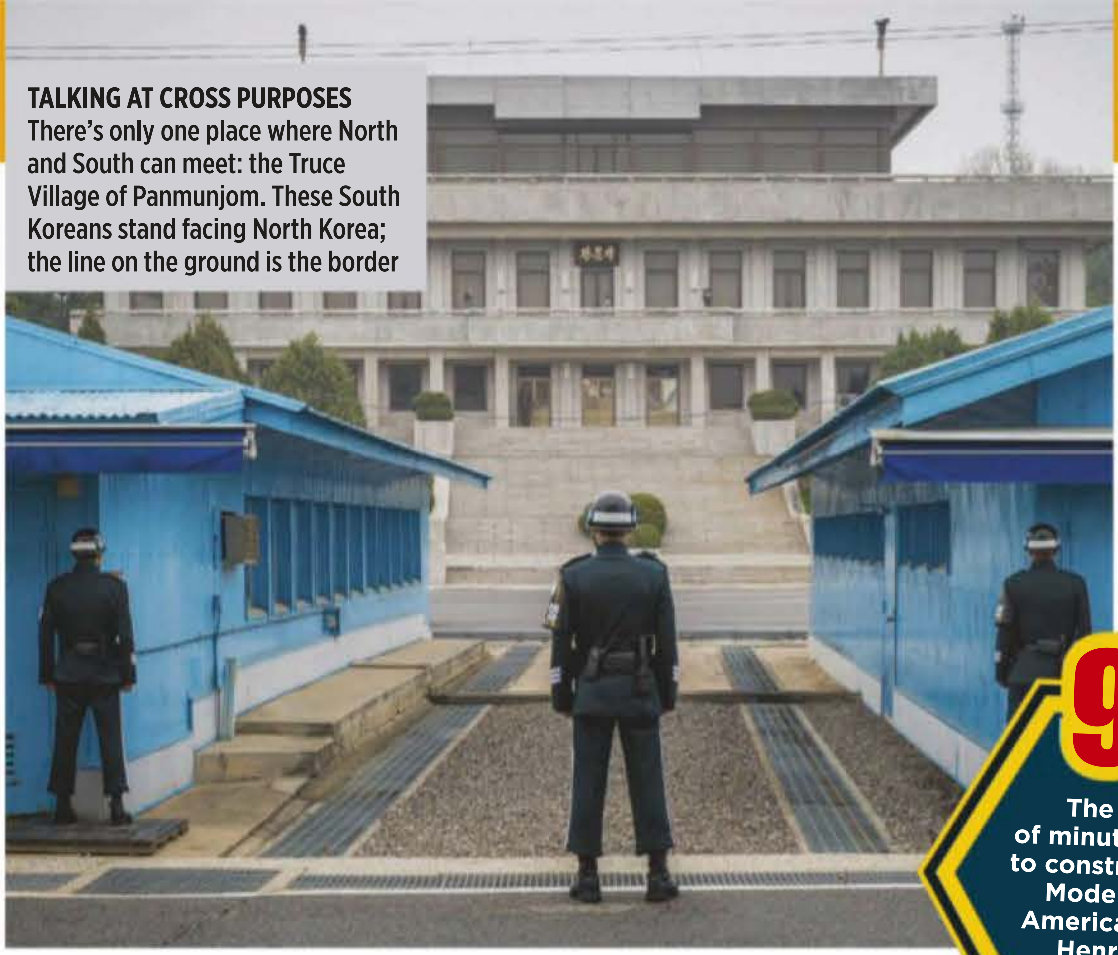
CROCK OF GOLD
Ming Dynasty vases are some of the most recognisable relics of the era

When was the first movie trailer?

SHORT ANSWER 1914 – though the first trailer came a year earlier...

LONG ANSWER The Swedish-born publicity guru Nils Granlund had a trial run of his latest innovation, the trailer, in 1913 when he played a short, teasing clip at a New York cinema of another attraction. It wasn't a movie, but the Broadway musical *The Pleasure Seekers*. Granlund had been hired by Marcus Loew, a later co-founder of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, though, and the idea was quickly recognised as a marketing marvel for cinema. The next year, Granlund started making trailers for Charlie Chaplin flicks.





TALKING AT CROSS PURPOSES There's only one place where North and South can meet: the Truce Village of Panmunjom. These South Koreans stand facing North Korea; the line on the ground is the border

Why did Korea split?

SHORT ANSWER Post-war tensions escalated into Cold War hostilities, with Korea a pawn of the superpowers

LONG ANSWER In the aftermath of World War II, the Korean peninsula, which had been under Japanese rule since 1910, was arbitrarily divided at the 38th Parallel to form two occupation zones, one controlled by the Soviets and the other by the US. This was intended as a temporary measure, until Cold War politics got in the way and neither side was willing to back down.

The North embraced a communist regime, while the South maintained a provisional military government with US support. By 1948, attempts at unification, overseen by the UN, had failed and South Korea formally established its own government in Seoul, under Syngman Rhee, immediately causing the North to install Kim Il sung as leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. War broke out in 1950 when North Korea invaded, but achieved nothing other than more entrenched divisions between the sides, and millions dead. North and South Korea have yet to sign a peace treaty officially ending that war.

Did Rome ever have kings?

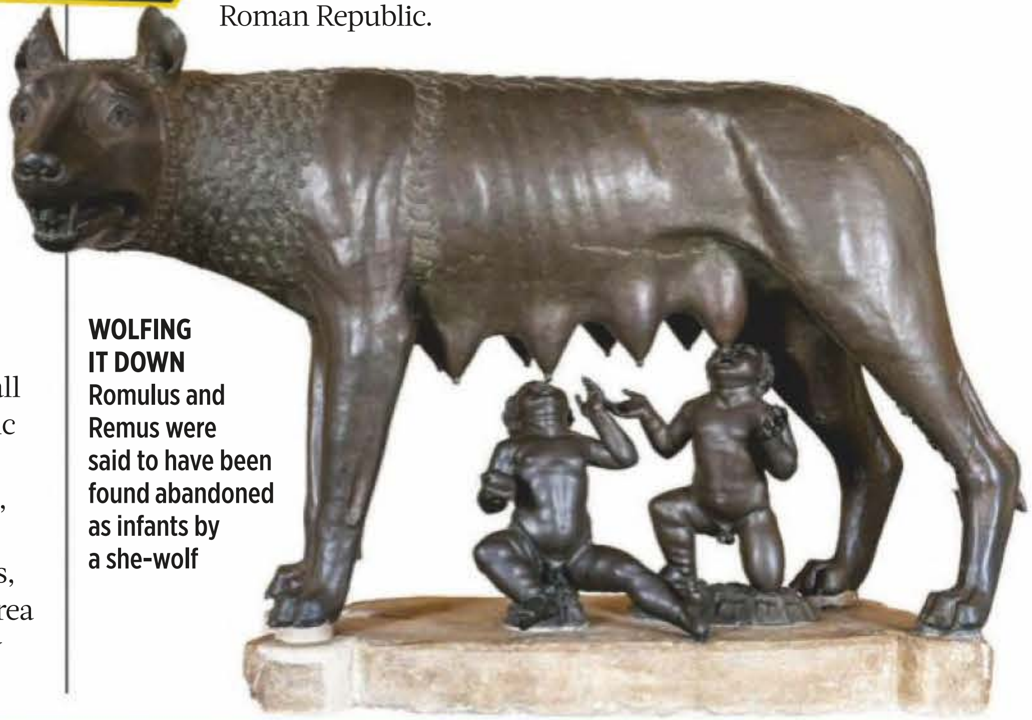
SHORT ANSWER Yes. Before the Empire was the Republic, and before the Republic there was royalty

LONG ANSWER Once Romulus (you know, the one raised by a wolf, who had a tragic falling out with his brother Remus) founded the city of Rome in 753 BC, he ruled as the first of seven legendary kings. They had absolute power over executive, judicial and military matters, although every time a king died his successor had to be elected by the people of Rome.

So when Lucius Tarquinius Superbus – said to be the son or grandson of the fifth king – seized the throne after planning the assassination of the sixth, his father-in-law, the Romans grew wary that they had a tyrant on their hands. Enraged when Superbus's son raped a noblewoman named Lucretia, in 509 BC the people overthrew him, heralding the birth of the Roman Republic.

93

The number of minutes required to construct a single Model T car on American inventor Henry Ford's assembly line.



WOLFING IT DOWN Romulus and Remus were said to have been found abandoned as infants by a she-wolf

When was toilet 'paper' invented?

SHORT ANSWER The first recorded use of paper for ablutions was in AD 589, though dedicated privy paper didn't roll off factory lines until 1857

POTTY FOR PAPER Perforated loo roll as we're used to today is a 20th-century invention

LONG ANSWER Perhaps it should come as no surprise that the first to see the benefits of paper in the bathroom were the Chinese. The earliest-known record comes from AD 589, when an official named Yan Zhitui wrote that he "dare not use" any paper on which has been written quotations from the *Five Classics* (seminal texts in Confucianism) or the names of sages for "toilet purposes". In the 14th century, the emperor issued a decree calling for paper measuring two feet by three feet for his bathroom needs. Best not to think on why he needed such large sheets.

Yet it would still be centuries later that toilet paper truly got on a roll, as it were. People had begun using old magazines, but, in 1857, New York-based entrepreneur Joseph Gayetty started selling the first commercially packaged toilet paper. Marketed as "the greatest necessity of the age!", his 'Medicated Paper' came in single sheets infused with aloe and had been intended as a medical treatment to cure haemorrhoids. On each sheet was Gayetty's name, although why he wanted people to wipe their backsides with his name is best left known only to him.

His sales weren't strong, however, and it took more than two decades or so before toilet paper came in perforated rolls. That said, the quality of the paper meant splinters were a common problem – three-ply, ultra-soft toilet paper was a dream that wouldn't be realised until the 20th century.

DIG FOR VICTORY
Tunnels were a pernicious problem for East German authorities throughout the life of the Berlin Wall

Did people tunnel under the Berlin Wall?

SHORT ANSWER Around 75 tunnels were dug between East and West Germany in desperate bids to defect

LONG ANSWER From its construction in 1961 to the fall in 1989, the Berlin Wall stood as a symbol of the Cold War and a physical barrier stopping thousands from fleeing Communist East Germany. Getting over the top was fraught with danger, as machine gun wielding guards kept watch, and getting caught going through a gate like Checkpoint Charlie, using a fake passport or hiding in a vehicle, meant instant imprisonment or death.

While equally risky, some would be defectors looked for an underground option. Tunnels had an added benefit that many people could escape at once rather than just in ones or twos above ground. What's more, the digging could begin in West Berlin there was no shortage of willing sympathisers to reduce the risk of being found out. As many as 75 tunnels were attempted, around a quarter of which led to the successful escapes of some 300 people.

The largest escape came in October 1964, when 57 East Germans crawled through a 140 metre tunnel that came up in a disused bakery. It had taken West German students five months to dig. In the end, East German authorities started using seismographic equipment in the hope of detecting tunnels.

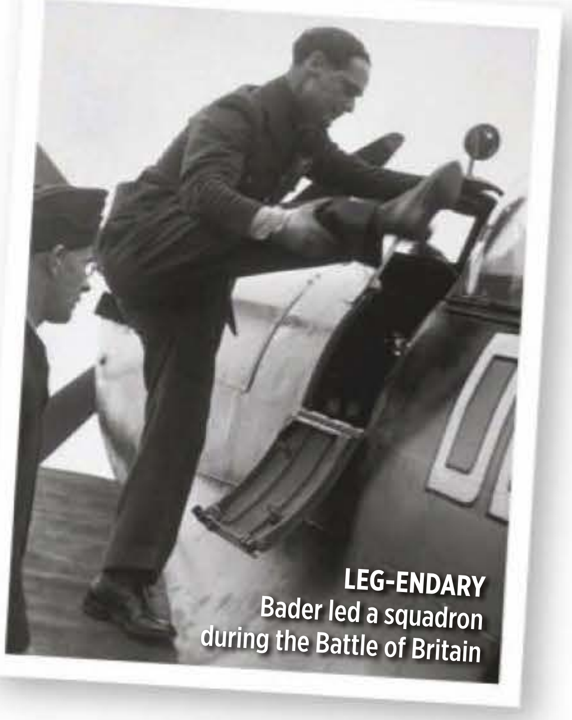
How did RAF ace Douglas Bader lose his legs?

SHORT ANSWER A plane crash in 1931 didn't stop him becoming a RAF flying ace in World War II

LONG ANSWER English pilot Douglas Bader flew his way to Royal Air Force legendary status in the skies over Dunkirk and during the Battle of Britain, despite being without both of his legs.

In December 1931, 21-year-old Bader crashed his Bristol Bulldog attempting a tricky aerobatic manoeuvre. It left him on the brink of death and forced doctors to amputate both of his legs below the knee, yet, with a stoicism typical of the man, Bader referred to the crash simply as a "bad show".

Determined not to drag his (now prosthetic) heels, Bader was soon flying again and was allowed to re-join the RAF when World War II broke out. When, in 1941, Bader had to parachute out during a dogfight and was captured, he lost one of his prosthetics, but such was his hero status that the Germans allowed an airdrop over his prison with a replacement. The flight was called Operation Leg.



LEG-ENDARY
Bader led a squadron during the Battle of Britain

LOTTERY TICKET
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£5,000
"PAID IN READY MONEY"

When was England's first lottery?

SHORT ANSWER Queen Elizabeth I got the idea rolling, although no numbered balls were actually involved

LONG ANSWER Raising taxes is never a popular move and Elizabeth I knew it, so she and her advisers devised a novel notion in 1567 to bring in much-needed extra coins for her ship and dock-building projects. As the Queen laid out in a letter, a lottery would be held. While the idea wasn't original – other countries had carried out similar money-making schemes, perhaps even in China to fund the Great Wall – this was the earliest-known instance in England.

Elizabeth hoped to sell 400,000 tickets at ten shillings apiece, which made it far too expensive for common people to enter. One winner would claim the jackpot of £5,000 (more than £1.1 million today), paid in "ready money", plate, tapestries and linen.

Ticket sales proved disappointing – even with the added incentive that participants would be free from arrest for crimes other than murder, felonies, piracy or treason - causing the draw to be delayed until 1569. The winner's identity has been lost.

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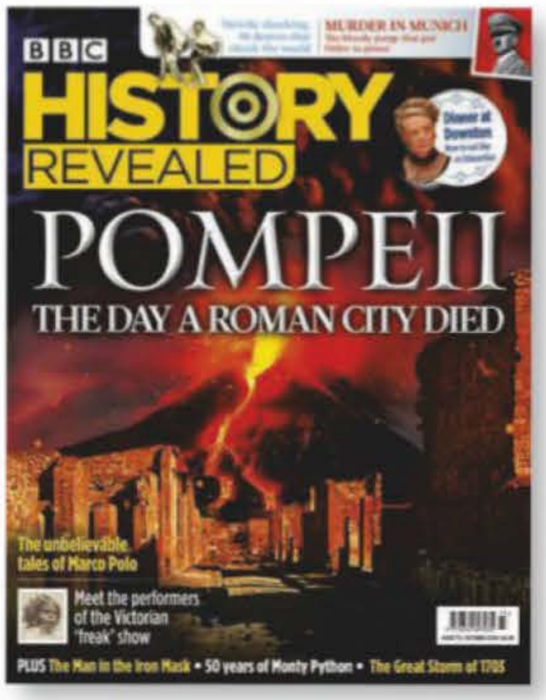
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TV, FILM & RADIO

THE LATEST DOCUMENTARIES, BLOCKBUSTERS AND PERIOD DRAMAS

ONE TO WATCH

KIRSTY GRIFFIN/BBC X2

ABOVE: **Eva Green as brothel madam Lydia Wells, who also appears to be a dab hand at Tarot reading**

RIGHT: **Emery Staines (Himesh Patel) is the romantic interest of down-on-her-luck Anna Weatherall (Eve Hewson)**

Gold crush

The Luminaries / BBC Two, May

Today, Hokitika in the West Coast region of New Zealand's South Island is a quiet town with a population of around 3,000 people, but in 1866 – the year Eleanor Catton's Man Booker Prize-winning novel *The Luminaries* (2013) is set – it was a booming but rough and ready settlement of 25,000 souls and 100 pubs, all thanks to gold having been found in the region.

This was an era when prospectors and those hoping to profit from their discoveries flocked to a region where, previously, few Europeans had visited. Among them, in Catton's fictionalised take on the period, was Anna Wetherell (Eve Hewson), a rebellious émigré who has sailed to New Zealand to begin a new life. In Hokitika, she supports herself as a sex worker. She also finds herself drawn to well-to-do Emery Staines (Himesh Patel), an attraction that's reciprocated.

Catton herself has adapted *The Luminaries* for the six-part series without, it seems, seeing the need to be too hidebound by her original text. "She's done such an amazing job of telling her story from a different point of view," Patel noted last year. The result, he added, is "compelling".

Whatever changes Catton may have made, we can expect a story of love, greed, murder and revenge filmed in spectacular locations. An international cast includes Eva Green (*Casino Royale*, *Penny Dreadful*) as brothel madam Lydia Wells, and Australian actor Ewen Leslie (*Top Of The Lake: China Girl*) as hermit Crosbie Wells.

The Luminaries is directed by Claire McCarthy, whose *Ophelia* (2018), a telling of the story of *Hamlet* from the perspective of the much maligned noblewoman (played by Daisy Ridley), attracted critical plaudits. It's co produced by Working Title Television, the TV arm of the company behind such movies as *Notting Hill*, *Atonement* and *The Danish Girl*.

▶▶ *Read our exploration of the Gold Rush era – from New Zealand to California, Australia and the Klondike – from page 26.*

Camp Jened – unofficially known as 'Crip Camp' – was, in the words of James LaBrecht, "a summer camp for the handicapped run by hippies"

Radical spirit

Crip Camp: A Disability Revolution / Netflix, streaming now

The title here, for a documentary being widely hailed as a breakthrough in the way disabled people are shown onscreen, is deliberately provocative. In real life, 'Crip Camp' was Camp Jened, located near Woodstock in New York State. In the words of documentary co-director and Jened graduate James LaBrecht, an award-winning sound engineer who was born with spina bifida, it was "a summer camp for the handicapped run by hippies".

It was also a place where, in the 1960s and 1970s, teenagers who at this point in history were too often marginalised began to find their voices and learn how to be community leaders. It's no exaggeration to say that Jened was crucial to the development of the wider disability rights movement in the US. Latterly, many who had attended Jened found themselves living around Berkeley, where they began to advocate for new laws that would require public places to be accessible to everyone, and for an end to discrimination against those with disabilities.

Sometimes this involved direct action. Jened alumna Judy Heumann (*right*), for example, helped to organise the 28-day occupation of the federal Health, Education and Welfare offices in San Francisco in 1977. It was a protest aimed in part simply at ensuring that existing disability rights legislation was enacted, and which drew the support of activists from across society, ranging from unions to the Black Panthers.

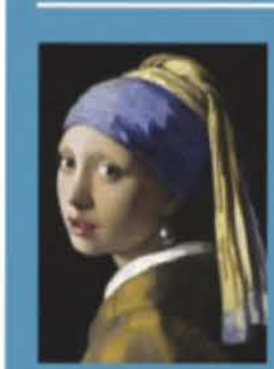
Funding for the film, so directed by Nicole Newnham, came via Higher Ground, the production company run by Barack and Michelle Obama.

Judy Heumann during the 28-day sit-in in 1977, which involved some 150 people

PATTI SMOLIAN X1, NETFLIX X1, GETTY IMAGES X3, FRÉDÉRIC BATIER/SKY DEUTSCHLAND X2

Portrait of an imagined past

Girl With A Pearl Earring / weekdays from Monday 11 May, Radio 4



As a teenager, novelist Tracy Chevalier bought a poster of Dutch painter Johannes Vermeer's 'Girl With A Pearl Earring'. It was money well spent: it inspired her bestselling 1999 novel of the same name. It tells the fictionalised story behind the 17th century image, which shows a woman, her real identity lost in the mists of time, gazing over her shoulder.

Expect writer Ayeesha Menon and director Amber Barnfather's new adaptation to be atmospheric, recorded as it was on location at Keats House in Hampstead and featuring especially recorded Dutch harpsichord music from the 17th century, performed by Tim Motz. As for the story, it charts how an artistic servant girl, Griet (Libby Mai), becomes assistant to Vermeer (Khalid Abdalla) and, at the insistence of a patron, his subject in a painting that causes ructions within Vermeer's household.

Howard Carter (*left*) examines Tutankhamun's mummy in 1922

Mean streets

Babylon Berlin, Now TV and DVD / streaming and available to buy

At a cost to date of at least €40 million, *Babylon Berlin* is the most expensive TV show ever made in Germany. Its generous budget is, in part, simply because period dramas always cost a lot to make and this is a show that recreates life in Germany during the Weimar Republic era (1919–33), an age of extremes when new ideas flourished but which ultimately gave rise to Nazism.

Based on the bestselling crime novels by Volker Kutscher, the richly atmospheric *Babylon Berlin* revolves largely around copper Gereon Rath (Volker Bruch), a man who fights both crime and his own inner demons following traumatic experiences in World War I. His sidekick is stenographer and aspiring detective Charlotte Ritter (Liv Lisa Fries). Their investigations take place against the backdrop of a capital in near-constant turmoil and take them into different corners of German life, meeting, among many others, nightclub denizens, gangsters and political movers and shakers along the way.

We first meet Rath as he's in drawn into a case that finds him torn between loyalty and his policeman's desire to get to the truth. The third series takes the story through to the Wall Street Crash, which ultimately triggered the Great Depression, and finds Rath and Ritter investigating the violent death of a film actress.

The show's latest episodes recently finished airing on Sky Atlantic, but all three seasons are available to view via Now TV until Monday 31 August. In addition, a new DVD boxset (£39.99, Acorn Media International) gathers together all 28 episodes.

LEFT: **Berlin of the Weimar era is ritzy and glitzy**

MAIN: **Volker Bruch stars as guilt-ridden WWI survivor turned detective Gereon Rath**

Ancient treasures

Tutankhamun In Colour / BBC Four, Monday 4 May

The discovery of the tomb of Egyptian boy king Tutankhamun (r1334–1325 BC), enthralled the world. Here was a tomb that, unlike so many, had never been ransacked by thieves, but was near miraculously intact upon its excavation in 1922 and 1923.

This documentary looks back at the days when British archaeologist Howard Carter (1874–1939) found Tutankhamun's lavish final resting place in the Valley of the Kings, and which features colourised footage from the era to bring the past vibrantly alive.

Rising free

Self Made: Inspired By The Life Of Madam CJ Walker / Netflix, streaming now

African American entrepreneur and philanthropist Madam CJ Walker (1867 1919) is listed in the *Guinness Book of Records* as the first female self made millionaire in the US. And while any such statement inevitably invites arguments, her life was indisputably remarkable.

Hailing from Delta, Louisiana, and the youngest of six children, Walker was the first of her siblings to be born into freedom following the signing of the Emancipation Proclamation. Having lost both her parents by the age of seven, she had to work as a domestic servant as a child. But despite an early life dominated by setbacks and tragedy, Walker built a fortune through selling cosmetics and in particular following her own experiences with a scalp disorder that resulted in hair loss hair care products aimed at black women.

Based on a biography written by A'Lelia Bundles, Walker's great great granddaughter, Netflix's new biographical drama sometimes takes liberties with the historical record, but it nonetheless sheds light on a figure who really should be far better known. Octavia Spencer stars as Walker in a story that follows its subject from plantation poverty to days when she was wealth and hugely influential.

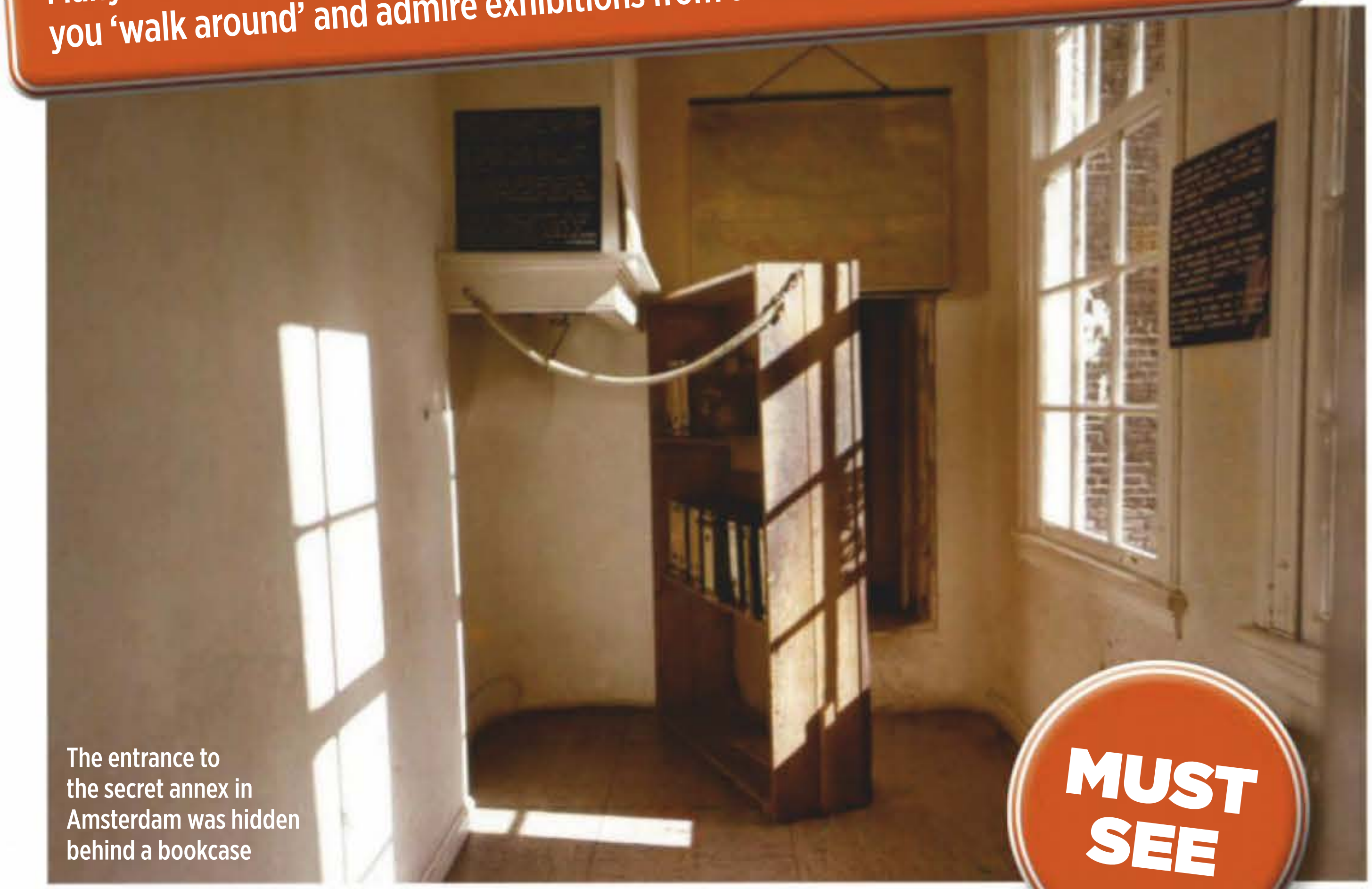
Madam CJ Walker, the first female self-made millionaire, c1914

EVENTS & EXHIBITIONS

WHAT TO SEE AND WHERE TO VISIT IN THE WIDER WORLD OF HISTORY

VIRTUAL MUSEUM TOURS

Many museums have opened up their doors to the wonders of virtual reality, letting you 'walk around' and admire exhibitions from the comfort of your own home



The entrance to the secret annex in Amsterdam was hidden behind a bookcase

MUST SEE

AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS

The Anne Frank House

annefrank.org/en/anne-frank/secret-annex

In 1942, Otto Frank and his family went into hiding in a secret annex above Otto's offices. The family had moved piecemeal to the Netherlands from their native Germany from between summer 1933 and spring 1934, after the Nazi Party's rise to power. The Nazis occupied the Netherlands in 1940, and two years later Otto decided to take his wife and two daughters into hiding. They moved, suddenly and secretly, into an annex above his back office, where they were soon joined by another Jewish family, the van Pels, and a family friend, dentist Fritz Pfeffer. The Franks remained here for 761 days.

This virtual tour lets you experience what it was like in the cluster of rooms hidden behind a bookcase. It was here, secluded from the outside world save for the small cadre of helpers in the office beyond, that young Anne Frank would chronicle her and family's lives in her diary. If you have a virtual reality headset, you can also navigate the annex in VR.

Anne's last diary entry was on 1 August 1944. Three days later, the Nazis raided the annex; the Franks, the van Pels and Pfeffer were sent to Nazi concentration camps. Otto was the only one to survive, freed from Auschwitz when the Soviets liberated it in 1945. Anne and her sister Margot ended up in Bergen Belsen, where they both died of typhus aged 15 and 19 respectively two months before it was liberated.

Otto returned to Amsterdam, where he discovered that Anne's diary had been found and saved by one of their former helpers. It was published as *The Diary of a Young Girl* in 1947, and since been reprinted in 60 languages.

Dreaming of becoming a writer, Anne Frank used her diary to express her thoughts and feelings

ALAMY X3, GETTY IMAGES X5

The British Museum was one of the first buildings in London to have electric lighting

LONDON, UK

The British Museum

Walkthrough: *bit.ly/2UjtXgH*
Collection explorer: *britishmuseum.withgoogle.com*

The British Museum houses some of the most famous artefacts from across the world (and across time) – and now you can stroll through the museum online. As well as virtually roaming the museum's galleries, you can also look in depth at their collections. From the Rosetta Stone and the Elgin Marbles to Hoa Hakananai'a – the moai statue from Easter Island – there are priceless objects from a wealth of civilisations waiting to be explored.

MEXICO CITY, MEXICO

Museo Nacional de Anthropologia

bit.ly/398YhzS

Mexico's national museum of anthropology, has some of the country's most important pre-Columbian artefacts, including the Aztec Calendar stone, known as the Stone of the Sun, giant head sculptures from the Olmec civilisation and treasures from the Mayan city of Chichen Itza. Another museum highlight is a replica of the supposed headdress of the Aztec emperor Moctezuma – a man who, it's said, drank 50 cups of hot chocolate a day to enhance his 'prowess'. Get up close to some of these amazing finds with the museum's 360° virtual tour.

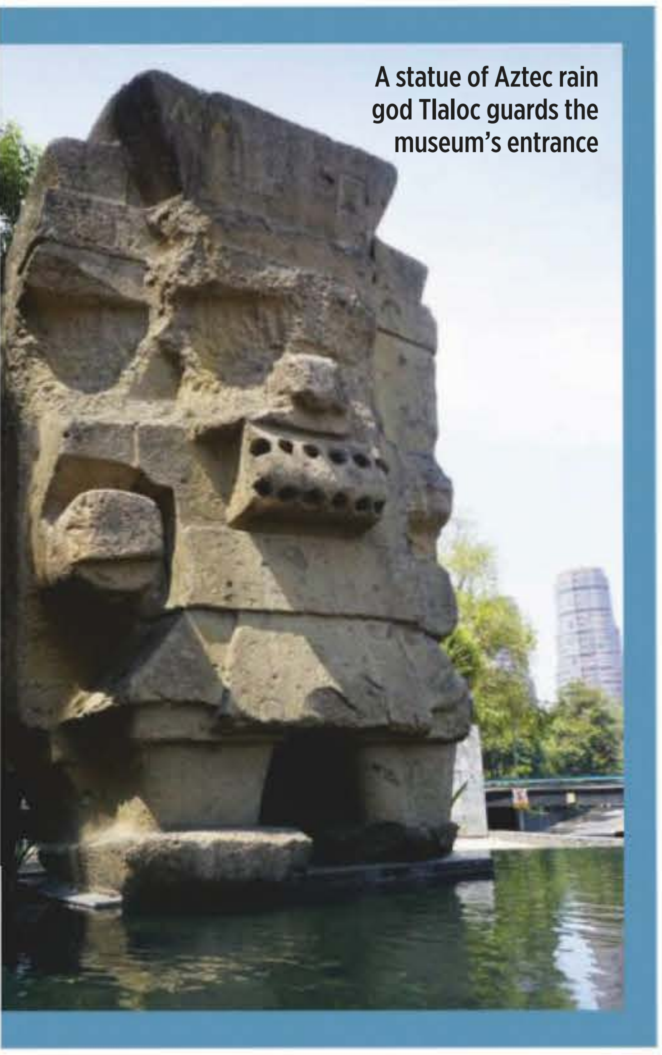
It was known as the king of the dinosaurs, but the *T rex* is just as famous for its remarkably short forearms

WASHINGTON, DC, US

The National Museum of Natural History

naturalhistory.si.edu/visit/virtual-tour

Run by the Smithsonian Institution, this venerable edifice is one of the most visited natural history museums in the world. Go online to take a walk through the exhibits, which range from the dinosaurs that used to roam America (including an 11.6m long *Tyrannosaurus rex*), the world famous (and quite unusually blue) Hope Diamond and a fossilised Neanderthal.



A statue of Aztec rain god Tlaloc guards the museum's entrance

MILTON KEYNES, UK

The National Computing Museum

my.matterport.com/show/?m=Vz8kCqGRjQA

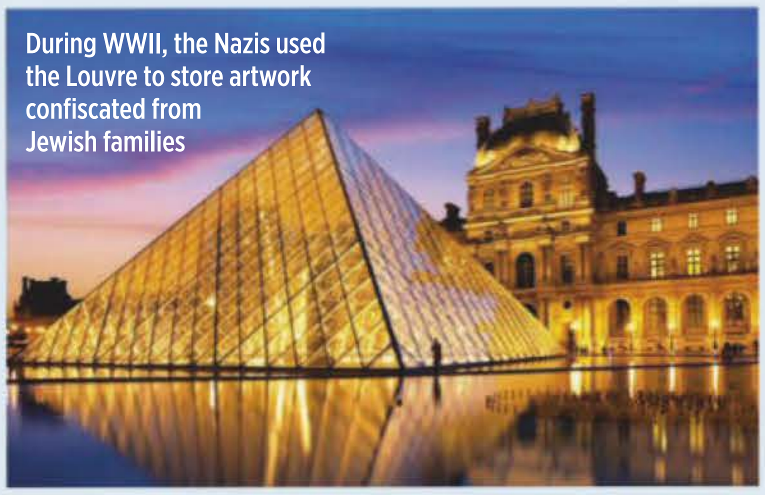
It seems only right that the location for the National Computing Museum is in the grounds of Bletchley Park, the centre of Allied codebreaking during World War II and the site of the development of the world's first computer. Most of the museum's exhibits can be explored via a virtual tour, including the world's oldest working computer, the Harwell Dekatron. The museum also holds a replica of the device used to crack Germany's Enigma machine.

PARIS, FRANCE

The Louvre

youvisit.com/tour/louvremuseum

Standing in the ground of the former royal palace of the same name, the Louvre Musuem is the largest art museum in the world. In just a few clicks of a mouse, you could be admiring the opulent Grand Salon in the apartments of Napoleon III before casting your gaze on the sculptures of the Ancient Greeks. In addition to its most famous resident – Leonardo da Vinci's 'Mona Lisa' – the Louvre houses one of the world's largest Egyptian collections, a combination of objects from the French royal collection, as well as from Napoleon Bonaparte's Egyptian campaign in 1798. This latter campaign led to the discovery of thousands of artefacts and gave birth to Europe's fascination with Egypt and the rise of Egyptology.



During WWII, the Nazis used the Louvre to store artwork confiscated from Jewish families

LONDON, UK

The Natural History Museum

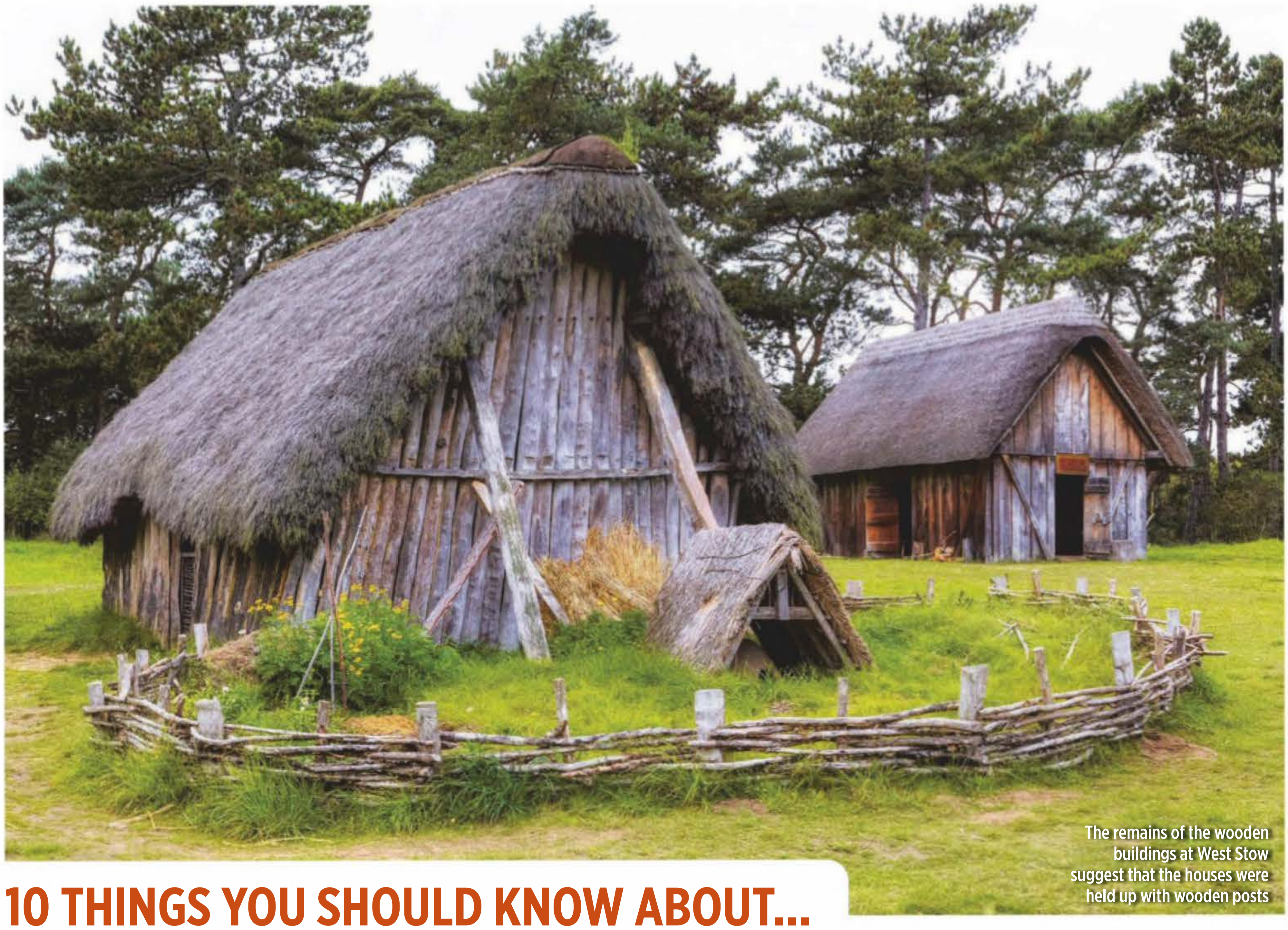
artsandculture.google.com/partner/natural-history-museum

Take a virtual tour through the Hintze Hall, the central gallery of the Natural History Museum, home to a skeleton of a blue whale known as Hope – which is suspended in the air. Inside, you can admire the museum's famously ornate architecture, an American mastodon – an Ice Age relative of the elephant – and a meteorite that is 4.5 billion years old.

The Natural History museum has more than 70 million specimens in its collection

BRITAIN'S TREASURES

YOUR GUIDE TO EXPLORING THE HERITAGE SITES OF BRITAIN



The remains of the wooden buildings at West Stow suggest that the houses were held up with wooden posts

10 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT...

WEST STOW ANGLO-SAXON VILLAGE SUFFOLK

1 It was built on the banks of the River Lark in Suffolk in the early 5th century, but abandoned by the mid 7th century. It has since been reconstructed with huts, workshops and halls made using traditional building methods.

2 The Lark Valley has East Anglia's greatest concentration of prehistoric settlements. There is also evidence of a Romano British settlement here, an Iron Age farmstead as well as Neolithic burial mounds.

3 The land here may have been used for farming in the medieval period but by the 14th century, a sand blow had covered the site and it remained hidden until the 20th century.

4 In the mid 19th century, a nearby Anglo-Saxon cemetery was excavated: more than 100 skeletons were found with burial goods, but the village was not discovered.

5 Archaeologist Basil Brown (best known for excavating the Anglo Saxon Sutton Hoo ship burial) found Romano British pottery kilns at West Stow in 1940. Excavations in 1947 uncovered an Anglo Saxon settlement, and further excavations between 1957 and 1972 unearthed several artefacts of note.

6 The original buildings would have been made from timber, straw and reeds. Families lived around a central hall a communal structure without a pit. Excavators found 69 houses and seven halls among the buildings.

7 It was originally believed that the Anglo-Saxon people lived in a pit with the house over it. Later finds support the idea that a wooden floor was built over the pit, the latter keeping the floor above dry and warm.

8 Evidence suggests that the people who lived here were farmers who raised cattle, sheep, pigs and goats, and grew wheat and barley.

9 Pottery found at the site suggests that the villagers traded across East Anglia, and people of a higher status were marked out with gilded brooches and amber beads.

10 Many of the finds at West Stow emphasise the importance of zoomorphic design (representing animals) in Anglo Saxon art. Creatures real and mythical were symbolic and could be found on jewellery, weapons and pots.

SIMON CUPIT/HERITAGE SERVICE/WEST SUFFOLK COUNCIL X5, ALAMY X2

INFORMATION

GETTING THERE

West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village is outside Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk, just off the A134.

OPENING TIMES AND PRICES

PAID ENTRY Open daily* between 10am and 5pm. Adults £6, children £3. The country park that surrounds the village is free to enjoy, with a charge for parking.
**Currently closed due to Covid-19; please check website before visiting*

FIND OUT MORE

weststow.org

KEY DATES

cAD 420
Earliest date of Anglo-Saxon occupation of the village

cAD 650
The village enters a decline, and is almost completely abandoned by the middle of the 7th century

c14th century
The village is used for farming and ploughing

1849
An Anglo-Saxon cemetery is excavated at West Stow – skeletons are unearthed alongside blades and jewellery

1940
Basil Brown, discoverer of the Sutton Hoo ship-burial, finds Romano-British pottery kilns at West Stow

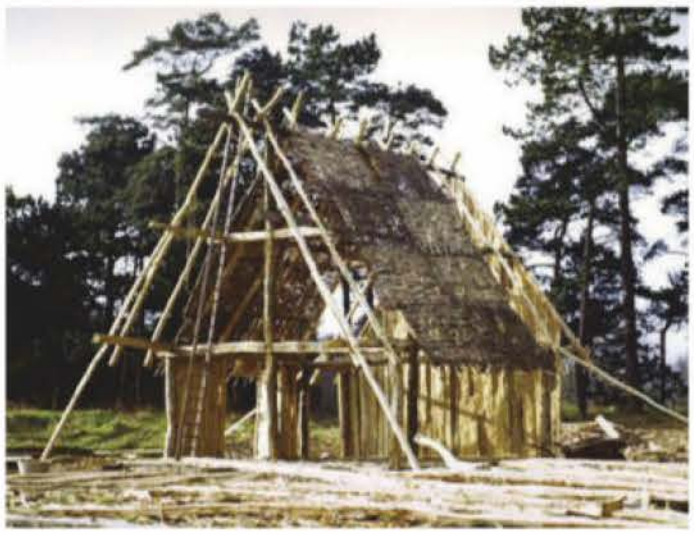
1947
Brown finds evidence of an Anglo-Saxon settlement

1957-72
Excavations are undertaken and hundreds of artefacts are unearthed

1976
West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village Trust is established, but which time three buildings had already been reconstructed

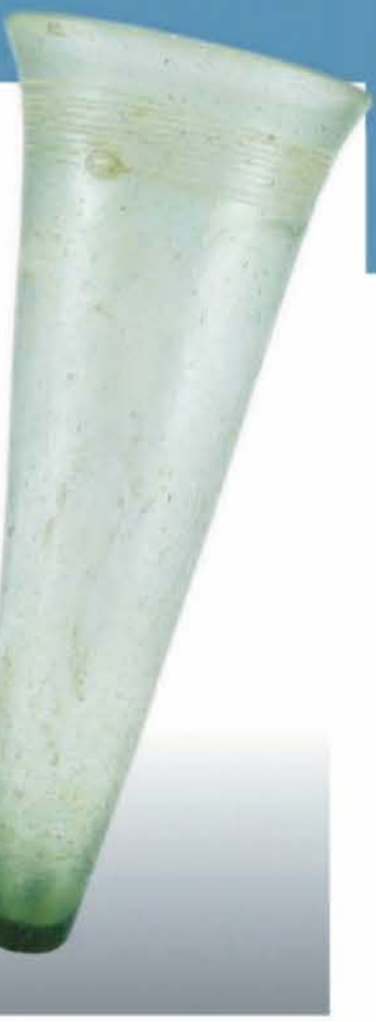
1999
The current visitor centre opens

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR...



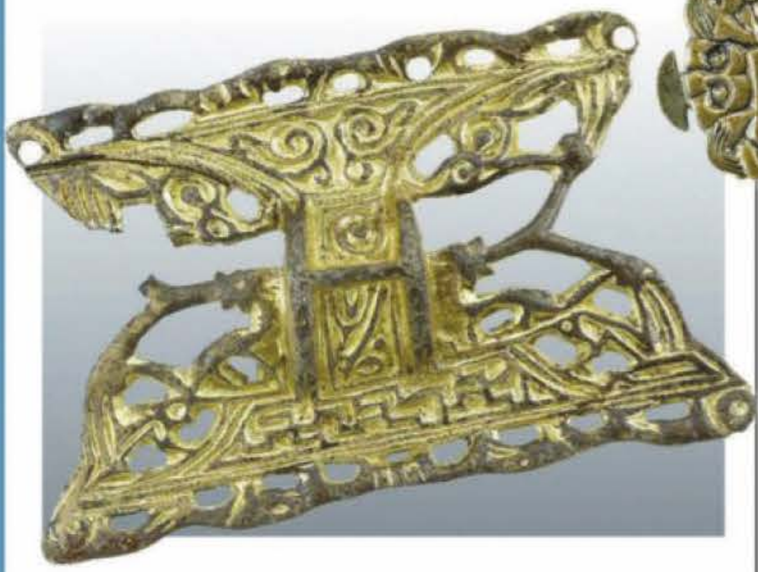
HUT RECONSTRUCTIONS

The majority of the reconstructions at West Stow have been built where the originals once stood, and been made using traditional materials and methods such as thatching. Pits were built underneath the hut floors to keep the room above warm.



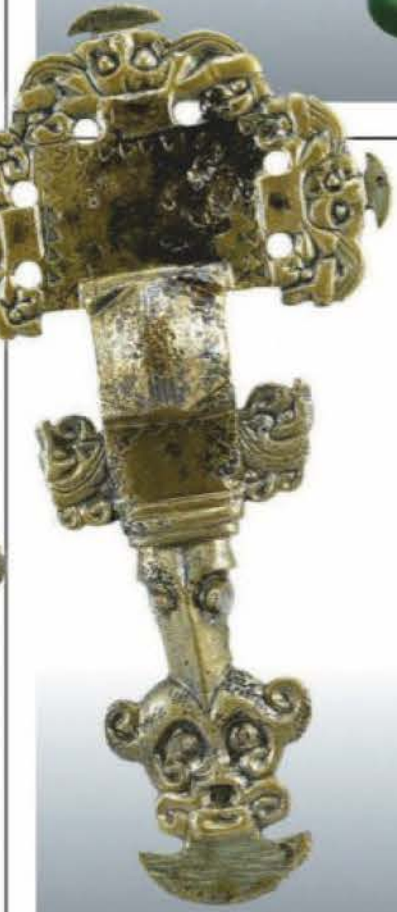
GLASS CONE BEAKER

This glass beaker was probably imported from a Frankish workshop in modern day France, Belgium or Germany and would have been expensive, suggesting that its owner was of high status.



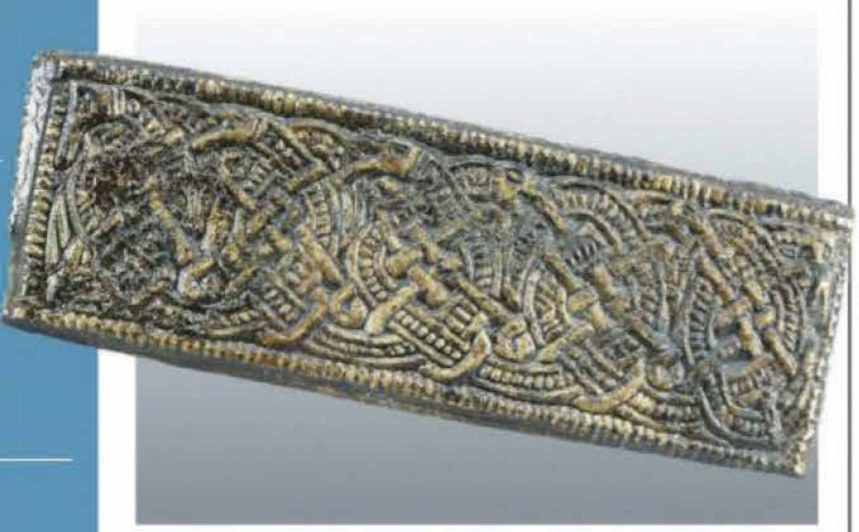
EQUAL-ARMED BROOCH

This brooch possibly inspired by Roman designs was found in the nearby Westgarth Gardens Anglo Saxon cemetery in Bury St Edmunds. Normally worn by women, such clothing fasteners could also express cultural identity.



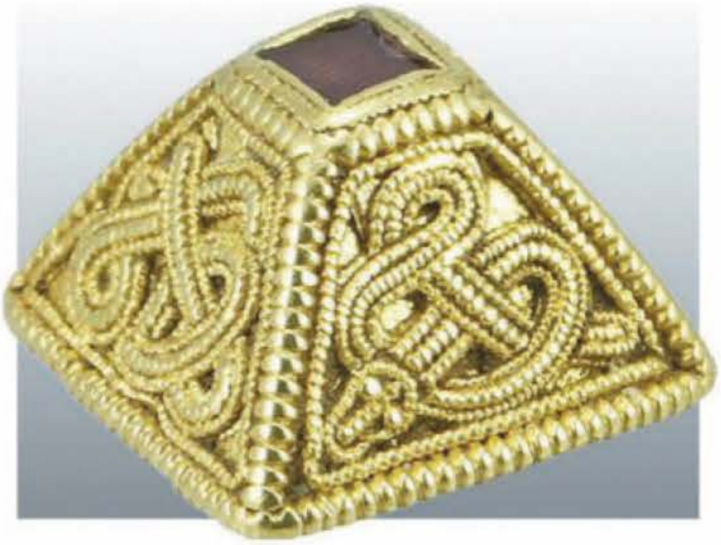
FLORID CRUCIFORM BROOCH

This cross shaped brooch is one of 49 discovered at West Stow during the cemetery excavation in 1849. Unusual eagle headed beasts are used for decoration but their meaning is unclear.



ICKLINGHAM DIE PLATE

Made of copper alloy, this die plate may have been used to stamp an impression of its surface on sheets of gold or silver foil to decorate objects such as drinking horns. It features six dragon like creatures whose bodies are interwoven in a repeating pattern.



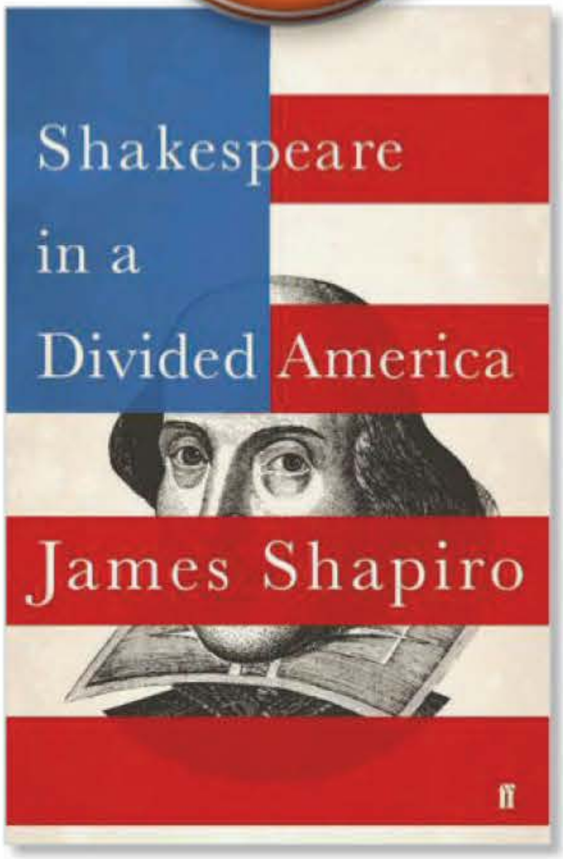
PYRAMID MOUNT

This mount, made of gold, was used for a sword scabbard or belt. With a garnet and snake like creatures as decoration, it's believed that it belonged to someone important and may have even been a royal gift.

BOOKS & AUDIO BOOKS

THIS MONTH'S BEST HISTORICAL READS AND LISTENS

BOOK OF THE MONTH



Shakespeare in a Divided America

By James Shapiro
Faber & Faber, £20, hardback, 320 pages

Shakespeare is so often associated with Englishness (and, later, Britishness) that considering his impact on another nation initially seems a little strange. Yet this illuminating book persuasively reveals the importance of his work in some of the major events in American history. From the nation's earliest days to the election of Donald Trump, via the ongoing legacies of slavery and racism, James Shapiro suggests that the Bard's plays have been used as a prism through which to understand and frame America's history and role in the world.

> "In many ways, Shakespeare speaks more clearly and directly to American preoccupations than he does to English ones"

JAMES SHAPIRO explains how the works of playwright William Shakespeare ties into the history of the United States, and why 1999 film *Shakespeare in Love* is such a touchstone

Is there a moment that inspired you to write this book?

That moment was the 2016 election of Donald Trump. I woke up that November morning and realised that, living in my Democratic bubble in New York City, I had misunderstood something fundamental about my country. Having spent the past quarter century or so investigating London in Shakespeare's day, I realised that I had ignored my own nation.

In what ways is Shakespeare more important and pivotal in US culture and politics than we might expect?

I have great confidence that Shakespeare's work spoke to Elizabethan preoccupations. But in many ways, he speaks more clearly and directly to American preoccupations than he does to English ones. I'm not exactly sure why, but America embraced Shakespeare as its national poet.

If you could travel back in time and witness a staging of a Shakespeare play, which would you like to see?

I would probably choose the production of Othello in Corpus Christi, Texas, that the US army put on while they were waiting to fight in the Mexican-American War (1846–48). It featured [future US president] Ulysses S Grant rehearsing the role of Desdemona! We have no recordings of it; nobody described what that process was like except for 50 years later or so. That would have been, for me, an extraordinary event.

Joseph Fiennes played the Bard in *Shakespeare in Love*

Are there any other Shakespeare stagings that stand out for you as depicting particular moments in American history?

The 1998 film *Shakespeare in Love*, a retelling of Romeo and Juliet, is significant. By the early months of 1999, it had been seen by around one in ten American adults, because it speaks to the Shakespeare that Americans wanted to believe in. But there was a problem with that film. Its script dealt with a Shakespeare who is heterosexual but who falls in love with another man and is reconciling himself to that. Harvey Weinstein – recently convicted of and imprisoned for rape – didn't like Norman's script and brought in Tom Stoppard to rewrite it. Stoppard understood that he had to suppress what he called that 'gay theme' and move in a different direction.

How would you like your book to change the way people view Shakespeare's importance in American history?

This is a book for people interested in Shakespeare, but it's also an alternative history of the US. I got my understanding of American history through textbooks in high school, and the story that I was taught is at odds with the story that emerged in the writing of my book. And as we are convulsed, at the time of this pandemic, by so many forces – economic and social and political – we would do well to understand the fault lines in this culture, so that we can pull together and move forward.

James Shapiro discusses Shakespeare and America on the HistoryExtra podcast: *https://bit.ly/2vNBf3Z*

SIX MORE BOOKS TO READ

Helen McCarthy
Double Lives
A HISTORY OF WORKING MOTHERHOOD

Double Lives: A History of Working Motherhood

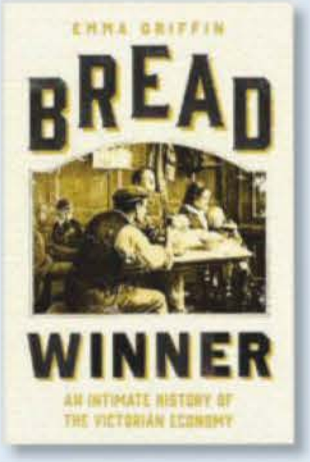
By Helen McCarthy
Bloomsbury, £30, hardback, 560 pages

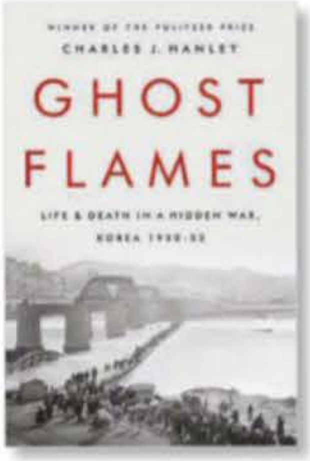
As the new working patterns dictated by the current coronavirus crisis have brought forcibly home, balancing parenthood with work is often not an easy task. This detailed look at how mothers in British history have managed these dual lives places women centre stage, exploring how their needs and desires shaped the course of history just as much as government policy. Ranging from the Victorian era to the present day, the rise of womens' rights to the modern pressure to 'have it all', it's fascinating throughout.

Bread Winner: An Intimate History of the Victorian Economy

By Emma Griffin, Yale, £20, hardback, 320 pages

Economic history can often seem complex and cold, but this telling of how women and their husbands made ends meet during the Victorian era is anything but: livelihoods are squandered, children are left destitute, and sometimes just sometimes families are able to profit from Britain's extraordinary economic growth in the period.
Featuring often moving extracts from the autobiographies of working class Victorians, this book brings the trials and tribulations of the 19th century to life.

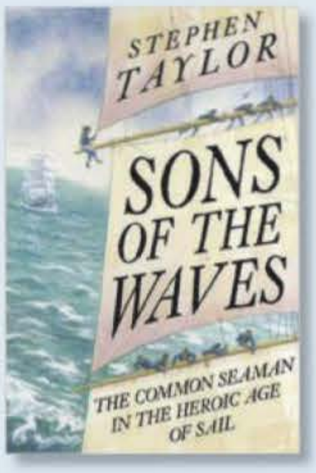

EMMA GRIFFIN
BREAD
WINNER
AN INTIMATE HISTORY OF THE VICTORIAN ECONOMY


WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE
CHARLES J. HANLEY
GHOST FLAMES
LIFE & DEATH IN A HIDDEN WAR, KOREA 1950-53

Ghost Flames: Life & Death in a Hidden War, Korea 1950–53

By Charles J Hanley
PublicAffairs, £30, hardback, 528 pages

The war that sparked when North Korea backed by China and the Soviet Union invaded South Korea in 1950 went on to become one of the Cold War's deadliest episodes. This sobering book brings home the scale of those losses by following the experiences of a cast of 20 people caught up in the conflict: soldier, teenager, medic, mother. Together, they reveal the human cost of a conflagration whose causes and consequences deserve to be better known.


STEPHEN TAYLOR
SONS OF THE WAVES
THE COMMON SEAMAN IN THE HEROIC AGE OF SAIL

Sons of the Waves: The Common Seaman in the Heroic Age of Sail

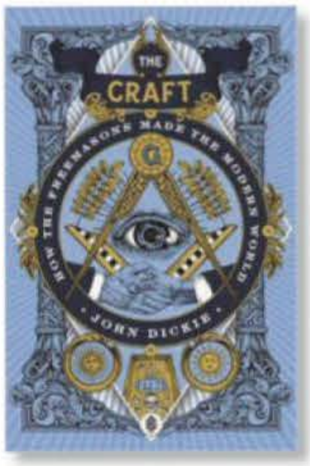
By Stephen Taylor
Yale, £20, hardback, 416 pages

This biography of Jack Tar is not like conventional biographies, if for no other reason than its subject is not a single individual but a whole group. Yes, 'Jack Tar' (also known as Foremast Jack) was the nickname for navy seamen, and this book heads below decks to reveal what their lives were really like. Plunging into personal letters and official documents alike, the result is an accessible, humanistic portrait of a life characterised by hardship and comradeship.

The Craft: How the Freemasons Made the Modern World

By John Dickie
Hodder & Stoughton, £25, hardback, 464 pages

Shrouded in mystery, and sometimes derided for its secrecy: you've probably heard of the Freemasons, but may know little about them. This eye opening account chronicles the society from the founding of its first 'Grand Lodge' in 1717, to its central role in the British Empire and conflicts with the Catholic Church and 20th century fascists. Featuring a host of recognisable names (Mozart, George Washington, the Duke of Wellington) this is an epic, continent spanning story that reaches right into the present.


THE CRAFT
HOW THE FREEMASONS MADE THE MODERN WORLD
JOHN DICKIE

The HABSBURGS
THE RISE AND FALL OF A WORLD POWER
MARTYN RADY

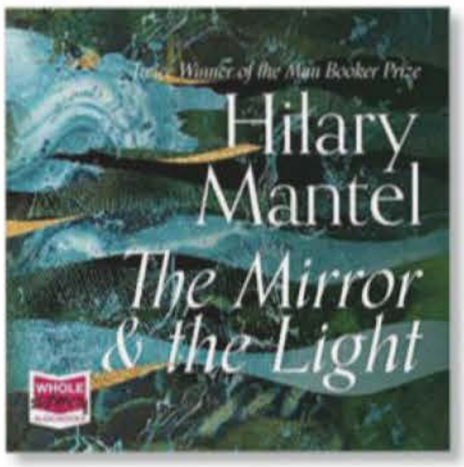
The Habsburgs: The Rise and Fall of a World Power

By Martyn Rady
Allen Lane, £24, hardback, 400 pages

This profile of the Habsburgs the royal house that bestrode Europe for centuries is concerned as much with the personal as it is the political. We learn, for instance, that Habsburg men were expected to remain sexually active with their wives because it was thought a woman's womb would shrivel otherwise, and that Charles II's postmortem revealed "a single testicle, black as coal". Uniting such lurid episodes is a tale of survival, from modest origins to control of an empire and, finally, 20th-century catastrophe.

ALAMY

OUR PICK OF AUDIO BOOKS



The Mirror and the Light

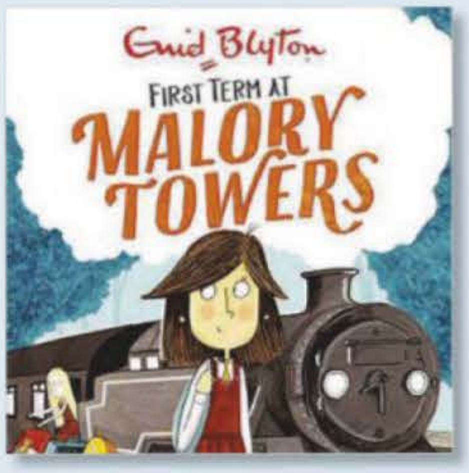
By Hilary Mantel (narrated by Ben Miles)
Whole Story Audiobooks, £29.99, runtime 38 hours and 11 minutes

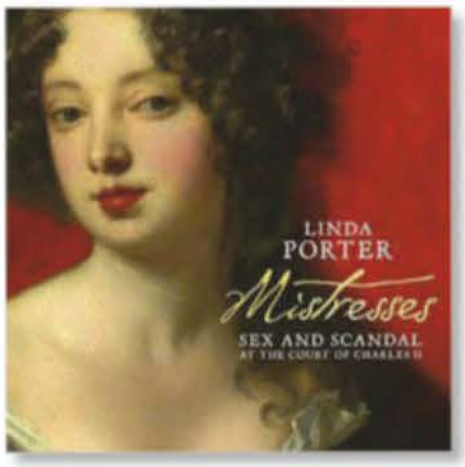
Clocking in at more than a day and a half, this audiobook of the final part of Hilary Mantel's Thomas Cromwell trilogy is suitably epic. But when a book is this immersive, it hardly matters. Picking up where 2012's *Bring Up the Bodies* left off, it's read by Ben Miles who played Henry's chief minister in the Royal Shakespeare Company's adaptation of *Wolf Hall*.

First Term at Malory Towers

By Enid Blyton (narrated by Beth Eyre)
Hodder Children's Books, £8.74, runtime 4 hours and 42 minutes

Enid Blyton's boarding school saga *Malory Towers* was published in 1942, but its charm has resonated with generations of children ever since. As the BBC launches a new TV dramatisation of the series, available on iPlayer now, this audiobook of the first instalment is a perfect introduction or reintroduction to the exploits of Darrell, Sally, Mary-Lou and co at the clifftop academy.





Mistresses: Sex and Scandal at the Court of Charles II

By Linda Porter (narrated by Julie Teal)
Picador, £12.24, runtime 14 hours

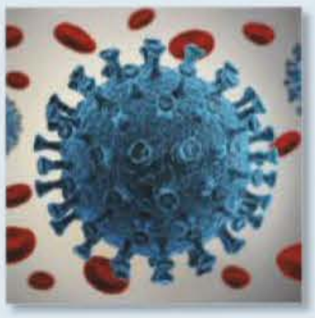
Hedonistic and sexually promiscuous, King Charles II father to as many as 15 illegitimate children was larger than life. Yet his enormous character has meant that the women of his court have often gone overlooked, an omission that Linda Porter's latest book aims to put right. Read here by actor Julie Teal, this is an insightful look at the lives of these women, and the power and influence they wielded.

HistoryExtra Podcast

Each month we bring you three of our favourite interviews from the HistoryExtra podcast archives...

Visit *historyextra.com/podcast* for three new podcasts every week

THIS MONTH... three podcasts on pandemics



Coronavirus: a historical perspective

https://bit.ly/39cTOMM

As the world continues to struggle in the grip of Covid 19, this episode recorded in mid March 2020 puts the pandemic into a historical perspective. Laura Spinney compares its spread with that of previous virus outbreaks, including 1918's devastating Spanish Flu, and discusses the lessons that can be learnt from the world's attempts to tackle them.

The Spanish Flu pandemic

https://bit.ly/2UmFjSx

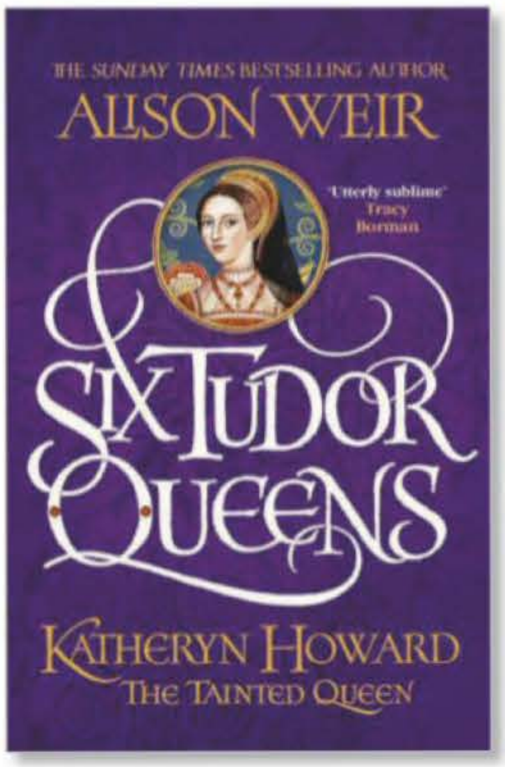
Pandemic 1918 author Catharine Arnold explores the Spanish Flu in more depth in this episode from 2018. From its sudden onset and grim symptoms, to far reaching social and political consequences, it's a truly global story. And in a world still coming to terms with World War I, efforts to tackle the pandemic memorably described as "like fighting with a ghost" often proved futile.

Medieval medicine

https://bit.ly/3dsCyq4

As Wellcome Collection's Dr Elma Brenner explains in this episode from February 2020, the Black Death of the 14th century had a shockingly high mortality rate. "In some localities, it's pretty clear that about two thirds of the population perished, which is terrifying," she says. But how did people in the Middle Ages attempt to deal with such an onslaught – and with ill-health more generally?

ALAMY X1, GETTY IMAGES X2


THE SUNDAY TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR
ALISON WEIR
'Utterly sublime' Tracy Borman
SIX TUDOR QUEENS
KATHERYN HOWARD
THE TAINTED QUEEN

Katheryn Howard: The Tainted Queen

By Alison Weir
Headline Review, 14 May 2020, £20, hardback

The penultimate book in Alison Weir's *Six Tudor Queens* series focuses on the tragic young Katheryn Howard. A pawn in the hands of her ambitious family, Katheryn is thrust into the arms of Henry VIII, but her past soon comes back to haunt her. Their marriage, which lasted little more than a year, would witness a tragic episode in English history. Was Katheryn to blame for her downfall or was she merely a naïve young girl caught up in an impossible situation?

Excerpt

In which Katheryn discovers she is to be sent to Syon Abbey as a prisoner, following weeks under house arrest

Katheryn felt guilty for causing her sister and her ladies so much grief. Yet there was no escaping her fear; it hung over her like a dark cloud. It was as if she was doing and seeing everything for the last time, for there might not be a future for her. She feared she would never take pleasure in anything again. At her core was her terror of what they might do to her. She could not get the image of the block out of her head, nor stop imagining herself kneeling there, waiting for the blow to fall. Would it hurt? Would she suffer like Lady Salisbury? Or would it be over so quickly that she would not feel it? All the same, losing your head was a dreadful thing to contemplate. Stop it! she admonished herself, remembering that she was going to Syon, not the Tower. If imprisonment was all she had to suffer, she would be very happy indeed and endure it patiently.

Q&A
Alison Weir

Alison Weir is the UK's top-selling female historian and author of both novels and non-fiction. The four previous books in the *Six Tudor Queens* series have all been *Sunday Times* bestsellers. She has sold more than three million books worldwide.

What was your overall impression of Katheryn Howard after researching and writing this book?
I'd always thought of Katheryn as a poorly educated airhead who met a tragic end. Writing her story made me see her as a kind-hearted girl who had lost most of those who loved her and could have guided her; a girl who fell prey to unscrupulous men.

Why do you think readers love the Tudors?
It's a story you couldn't make up! This is one of the most dramatic periods in English history, dominated by the charismatic and complex Tudor dynasty and its ongoing succession problem. The era is illuminated for us by the magnificent palaces that survive, the royal portraits by Hans Holbein and other court painters, and – thanks to the growth of diplomacy and printing – a wealth of source material. Tantalising gaps in our knowledge, even now, can lead to heated debate.

Do you have a favourite among Henry's wives?
It has to be Katherine of Aragon. I so admire her integrity and her courage. She was gracious, loyal and constant; a lioness of a mother, staunch in standing up for her daughter's rights, whatever the cost. I named my own daughter after her.

What is your research process for your novels?
I update my previous research and fictionalise my historical accounts. I have to think carefully about what to include, as each of the *Six Tudor Queens* novels is written from that queen's point of view, so I have to ask myself what my subject would have known about the events surrounding her. A lot of material just gets deleted.

Why did you choose this excerpt for us?
I wanted to convey some of the fraught drama of the book, much of which takes place after Katheryn's arrest. She has little idea of what is happening beyond the walls of her apartments at Hampton Court, where she has been immured for several weeks under house arrest, and she has been in terror lest she be taken to the Tower. But now she has learned that she is to be sent to Syon Abbey. Even so, she has no idea what the future holds and is tormented by memories of the bungled execution of the Countess of Salisbury.

PODCAST **ALISON WEIR** will be discussing her new book on the HistoryExtra podcast: *historyextra.com/podcast*

MICK KAVANAGH

LETTERS

National Shell Filling Factory No 6 in Chilwell, c1917 – it was one of the largest shell factories in the country

George Eager Michell received an OBE for his bravery

HERO IN THE FAMILY

I have just received the April edition of *BBC History Revealed* and was particularly drawn to the question about munitionettes in the Q&A section.

My great grandfather, George Eager Michell (*pictured above in the 1940s*), worked at the National Shell Filling Factory in Chilwell, Nottinghamshire, in the early years of World War I. He was at the factory when the catastrophic explosion of 1918 happened, and returned into the wrecked building several times, managing to rescue some of the workers. He was awarded an OBE for his bravery.

My father, Colin Colton, who is George's maternal grandson, has a press cutting from the time, of which he is justifiably proud.

Carol Bonsall, Derby

Editor says: Thank you for sharing your family story, Carol. The explosion at Chilwell munitions factory was the deadliest explosion to occur on British soil during World War I, and resulted in the deaths of 139 people and injured some 250 more.

Remarkably, given what they had been through, all but 12 of the surviving employees returned to the factory the next day for work.

GETTY IMAGES X1

SERVING THE NATION

I was interested in your recent piece on the history of National Service in Britain (*In a Nutshell, March 2020*). However, you failed to mention the soldiers who, at the start of 1962, were told that they would have to serve an extra six months. I was one of these soldiers and, at the time, I was serving with the British Army of the Rhine [occupation forces set up in Germany following the two World Wars]. I was 23, married, and my wife was pregnant. Thanks to the efforts of my wife and the SAAFA [the Armed Forces charity, formerly known as Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association] I was released from service after five months.

A Woffinden, Doncaster

CROSSWORD WINNERS

The lucky winners of the crossword from issue 78 are:

C Gooder, Bournemouth
J B Richards, Abingdon
G Davies, Salford

Congratulations! You've each won a copy of *Conversations with Dickens* by Paul Schlicke

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••• ON SALE 14 MAY •••

Married Bliss
JUST MARRIED

THE CHANGING FACE OF LOVE

From engagements and weddings, to stag dos and divorce, discover the historical course of true love

PLUS...

HISTORY'S STRANGEST FOODS WITOLD PILECKI: THE AUSCHWITZ VOLUNTEER **HOUSES THROUGH TIME** THE KOREAN WAR IN PICTURES **THE FIELD OF THE CLOTH OF GOLD** WHAT IF MAGNA CARTA HAD NEVER HAPPENED? **AND MUCH MORE...**

BBC HISTORY REVEALED

GETTY IMAGES

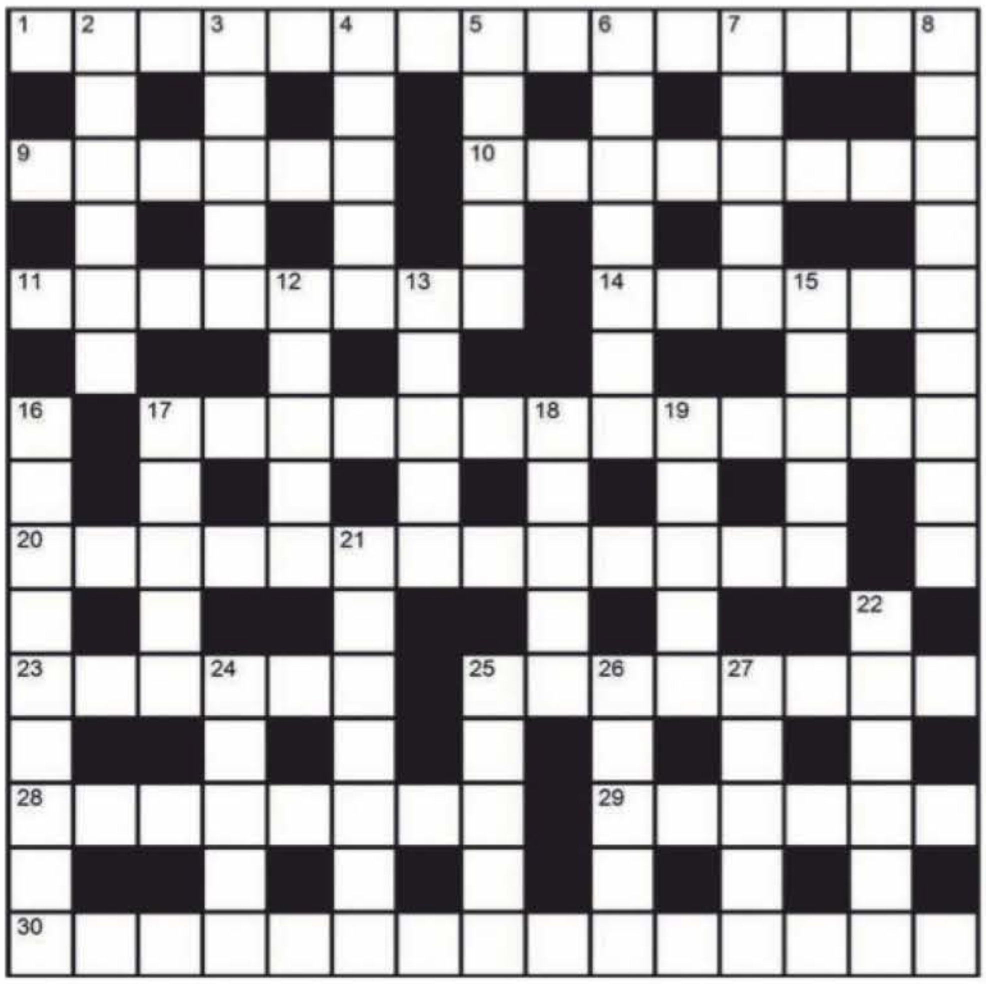
CROSSWORD & PUZZLES

TEST YOURSELF WITH OUR COLLECTION OF BRAIN TEASERS

CROSSWORD No. 81

Test your history knowledge to solve our prize puzzle – and you could win a fantastic new book

Set by Richard Smyth



ACROSS

1 *The* ___, 1951 Ealing comedy (8,4,3)

9 Junior officer; flag flown by a vessel (6)

10 John Joseph Maria ___ (1920–99), Jamaican poet and educator (8)

11 Ancient city sometimes known as 'the Jerusalem of the Balkans' (8)

14 ___ Lhamu Sherpa (1961–93), first Tibetan woman to climb Everest (6)

17 US novelist, author of the trilogy *USA* (1930–36) (4,3,6)

20 UK Home Secretary from 2001 to 2004 (5,8)

23 Body of water supposedly parted by Moses (3,3)

25 York street, formerly known for its butchers' shops (8)

28 East ___, term for a trading ship (8)

29 Communication device, notably used by the Byzantine Empire (6)

30 German-born film star (1901–92) (7,8)

DOWN

2 Trojan hero, subject of an epic work by Virgil (6)

3 Name given to Eva Perón (1919–52) (5)

4 John ___ (1572–1631), metaphysical poet (5)

5 Fabrizio ___ (1744–1827), Italian cardinal, leader of the Sanfedismo movement (5)

6 Stage name of the musician James Newell Osterberg Jr (b1947) (4,3)

7 West Yorkshire city; Kent village (5)

8 1924 adventure novel by CP Wren (4,5)

12 Term used in Islam for struggle or warfare (5)

13 Gore ___ (1925–2012), US writer (5)

15 In espionage, a provider of information (5)

16 Artistic movement of the early 20th century (9)

17 Sajid ___ (b1969), UK Chancellor of the Exchequer from 2019 to 2020 (5)

18 Male surname in Sikhism (since the 18th century) (5)

19 *The* ___, US television series, 1983–87 (1-4)

21 Historically high-ranking caste in Hindu India (7)

22 ___ couplet, poetic form associated with John Dryden and Alexander Pope (6)

24 William Grant ___ (1895–1978), African-American composer (5)

25 Council or assembly of a church (5)

26 Edward ___ (1928–2016), US playwright (5)

27 Eric Arthur ___ (1903–50), writer who adopted the pen-name George Orwell (5)

CHANCE TO WIN

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Post entries to **BBC History Revealed, May 2020 Crossword, PO Box 501, Leicester LE94 0AA** or email them to **may2020@historyrevealedcomps.co.uk** by noon on **1 June 2020**.

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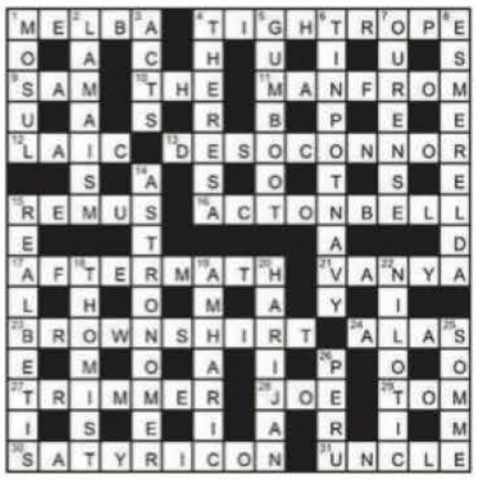
SOLUTION Nº 80



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GETTY IMAGES X3

TRUE OR FALSE

Have you been paying attention? The answers to the following statements can all be found in this issue of *BBC History Revealed*...

A The Bacton Altar cloth was once part of a dress worn by Queen Mary I

B The German Instrument of Surrender was signed on 6 May 1945

C The heaviest nugget of gold found in Britain to date weighs 59g

D Amy Johnson's solo flight to Australia in 1930 took 19 days

E Richard Nixon was paid $600,000 ($3m today) for his interviews with David Frost

HISTORY WORD SEARCH

Can you find ten words relating to the Ancient Egyptians?

ANSWERS BELOW

Ancient Egypt

R	D	I	M	A	R	Y	P	I	I	K	Y	U
J	T	D	S	S	M	N	B	E	N	D	Q	F
Y	U	O	F	U	V	L	Y	M	M	U	M	R
C	T	F	T	G	F	Y	O	S	Z	D	O	R
L	A	I	E	A	Q	S	U	R	Y	P	A	P
E	N	J	O	H	Z	Q	M	Q	O	B	F	E
O	K	S	H	P	Y	L	G	O	R	E	I	H
P	H	E	H	O	A	R	A	H	P	R	M	B
A	A	J	R	C	R	U	C	D	I	J	C	E
T	M	O	H	R	P	T	R	O	G	V	U	L
R	U	O	I	A	A	N	T	S	T	A	Q	I
A	N	H	T	S	I	R	I	S	O	I	P	N

PHARAOH
PYRAMID
PAPYRUS
CLEOPATRA
SARCOPHAGUS
TUTANKHAMUN
HIEROGLYPHS
NILE
OSIRIS
MUMMY

ANAGRAM

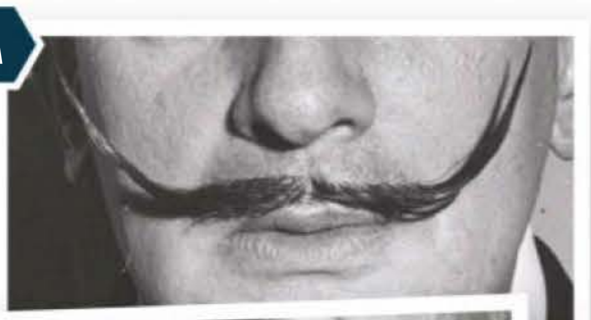
Site of a famous victory in the Hundred Years' War

Corgi tuna

PICTURE ROUND

Can you work out who from histoy these famous 'taches belong to?

A



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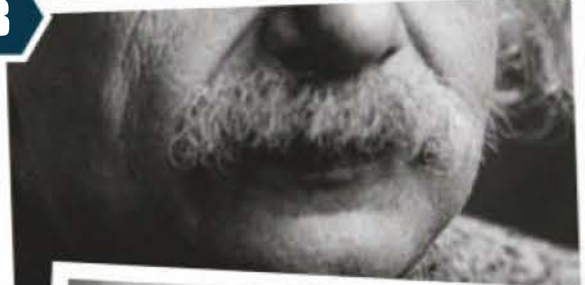

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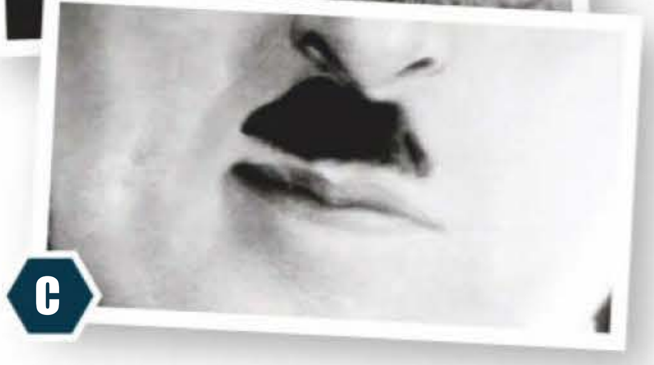


ANSWERS

True or False: A) False (see p15) **B)** False (see p58) **C)** False (see p26) **D)** True (see p18) **E)** True (see p20)

Anagram: Agincourt

Picture Round:
A) Salvador Dalí
B) Albert Einstein
C) Charlie Chaplin

History Word Search:

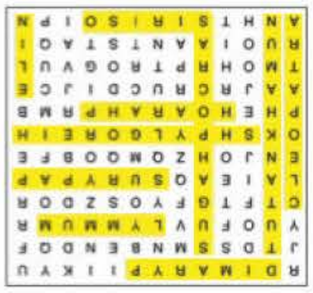
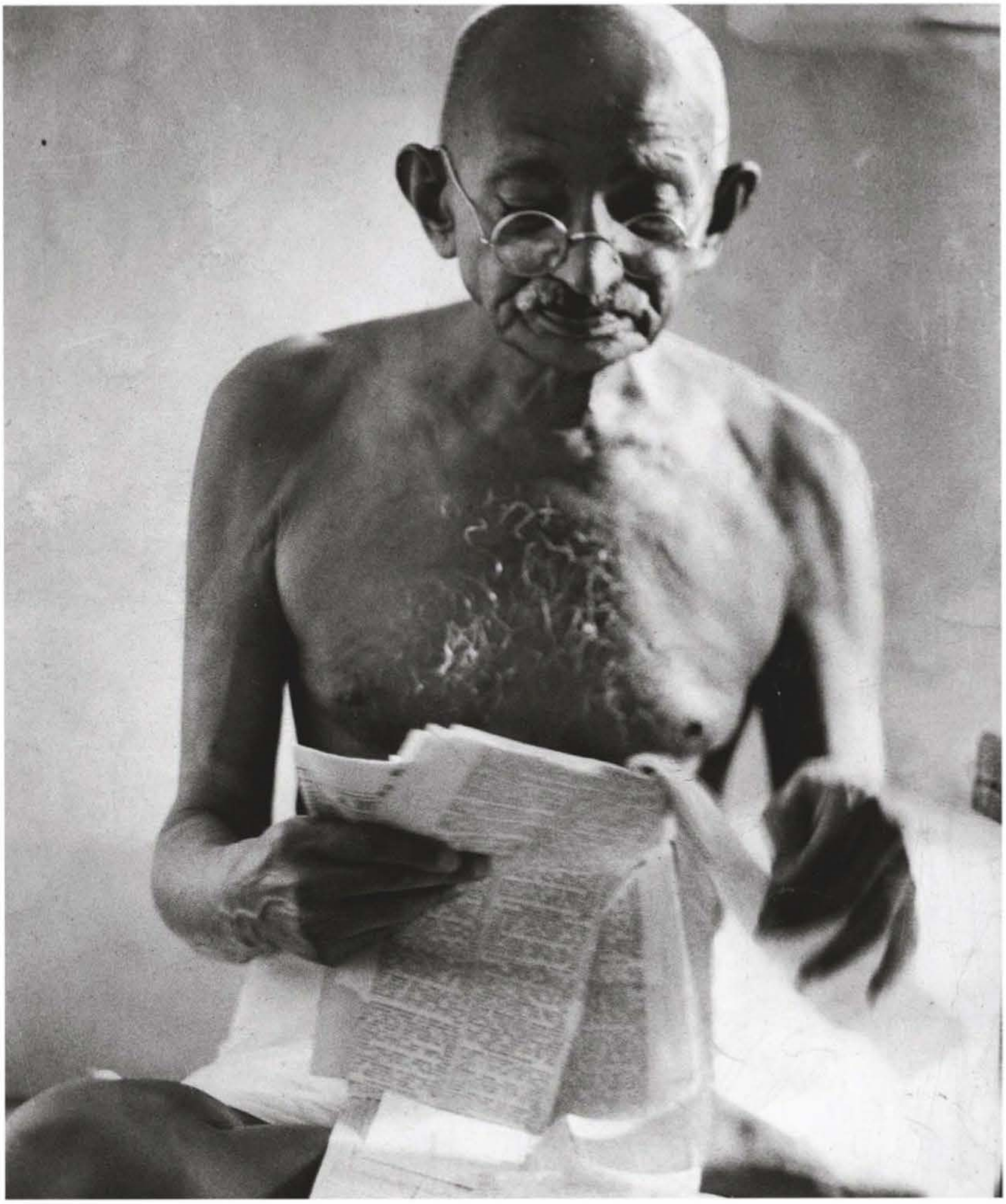


PHOTO FINISH

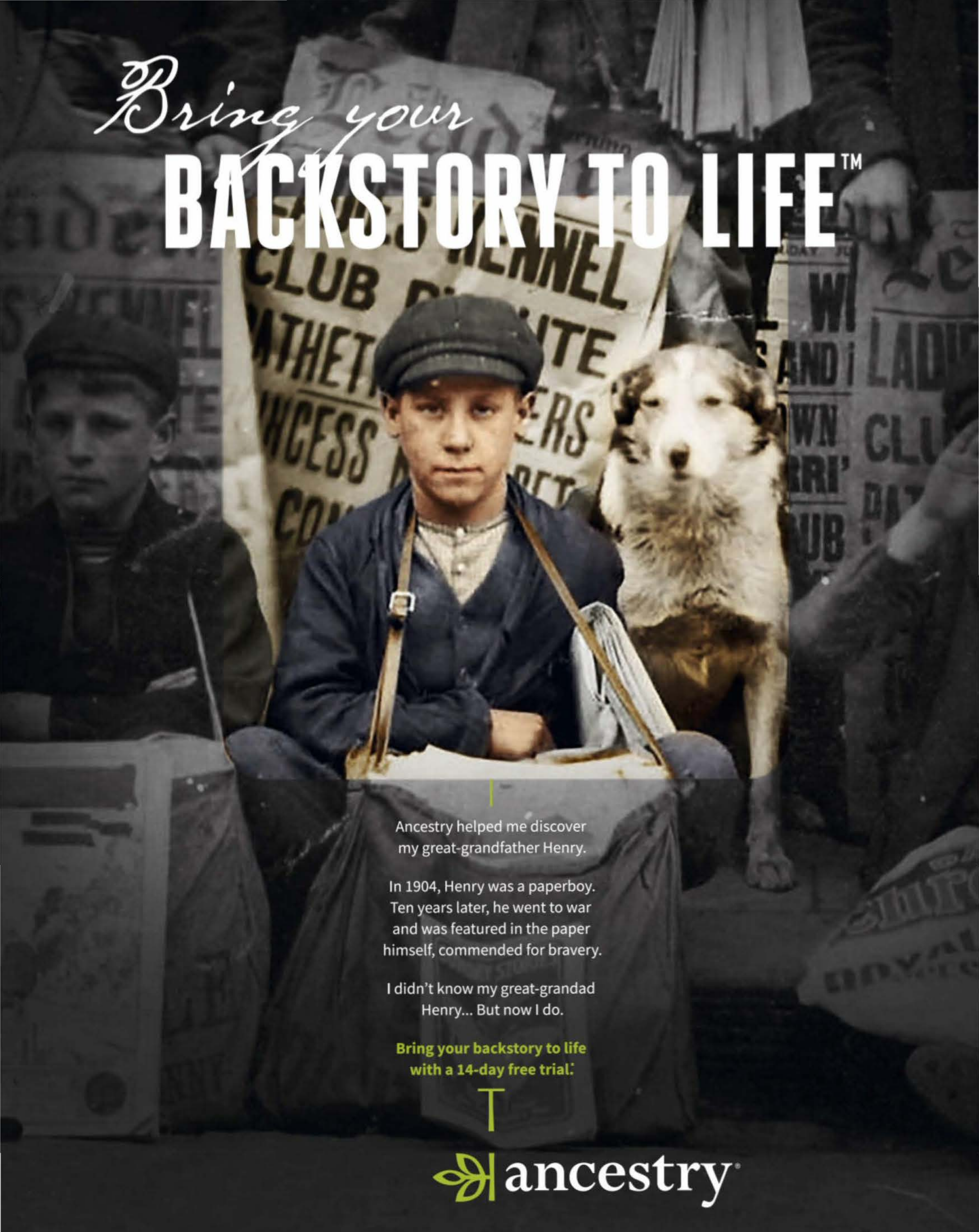
ARRESTING IMAGES FROM THE ANNALS OF THE PAST



MARGARET BOURKE-WHITE/THE LIFE PICTURE COLLECTION/GETTY IMAGES

MOHANDAS GANDHI c1946

Leader of the nationalist movement for Indian independence, Mohandas Gandhi gave his most passionate cry for passive resistance against British rule in his 1942 'Quit India' speech, after which he was imprisoned for two years. By 1946, India was on the road to independence, with the British Cabinet Mission arriving in March to discuss the transferral of power. That same year, Gandhi endured his fourth assassination attempt, when a train he was on was deliberately derailed. On 15 August 1947, India was granted its independence, although Gandhi was deeply troubled by the country's partition between Hindu-majority India and Muslim-majority Pakistan. On 30 January 1948, around two years after this photo was taken, Gandhi was assassinated by a Hindu extremist and India was plunged into mourning.



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